

# This Old House

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**MONEY-SAVING  
SECRETS  
FROM THE  
PROS**  
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1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26

**ATTENTION:** This is a **black and white** photograph. The image is a high-contrast, black and white photograph of a person's face, which is partially obscured by a dark, textured surface. The person's eyes are visible, looking towards the camera. The overall tone is somber and dramatic.















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HOW THE PRICE  
CUT COSTS

## home solutions

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## Letter FROM THIS OLD HOUSE

### Lots more DIY inspiration

"**T**ime for some housekeeping," I said, as I sat at a chair at the kitchen table in front of my laptop.

"Terrific," my wife said, "but how are you going to do that sitting down?"

"I meant some TGH housekeeping, in my editor's letter."

"Oh, so you're not cleaning out the basement—again?"

"Uh, no," I said, afraid to look up from the screen.

I opened a document and briefly detoured from letter writing to begin a list for next weekend.

Clean out basement

Wash off wife's disappointment

Visit theSew.com, find DIY peace offering

The Sew, by the way, is a new website the editors of *This Old House* have created. You may be less familiar with it (though we hope that changes) than with the ongoing seasonal disappointments I also cover, so let me explain.

If *thisoldhouse.com* is the complex home-improvement resource, *thissew.com* is its plucky younger sibling, full of clever tips and smart solutions and ideas for small-space living. The Sew brings together the best decor and simple DIY projects from *This Old House* online and dozens of other websites alongside Internet and printouts than with a dose of good humor. It also lets you join the Sew community, so you can use your tablet to create your own blog, where, perhaps, you can offer me...housekeeping page. I'd appreciate that.

Speaking of tablets, I'm pleased to say that *TOH* has been recognized by the judges of the Media Industry Newsletter (MIN) as having the best digital edition of any magazine in America. If you haven't seen *TOH* on tablet, I encourage you to download it—it's free to subscribers. Design director Hyatt Hill and deputy editor Kathryn Keller and their teams work hard to fill it with ideas and add interactive features and ideas. I tend to agree with the MIN judges. It's pretty amazing.

In other business: The Search for America's Best Remodel is off! Do you and your project have what it takes to be featured in the pages of *TOH*? You can enter at *thisoldhouse.com/yourTOH*. Or, if you've got a story or other idea, e-mail me and let me know. We love to hear from you, and we take your comments and questions and, yes, even criticisms to heart (only to help make *thissew* *TOH* for you every week).

Okay, housekeeping over, time to get back to the housekeeping...

*Scott Coville*  
SCOTT COVILLE, EDITOR  
SCOTT@THISOLDHOUSE.COM



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## Reader mail



**INSPIRED THINKING?** This *Old House* readers have it in abundance. Whether getting, sharing, or adding on to ideas from our pages, you never stop dreaming and creating. And gardeners, take note of the perfect spring reader project shared below.

### Beluster boot stand

The January/February 2015 issue came just before Christmas, and when I saw the boot rack in *Home Solutions* (Find it at: [rhoadhouse.com/jan2015](http://rhoadhouse.com/jan2015)), I knew it would be a perfect gift for each of our growers! Fortunately, there's a Beluster for Humidity Refuse coming, and it had a slew of belusters. I bought all of them and got to work. Thanks for the idea.

—JOHN MORGAN, BETHLEHEM, PA.

### Personal resolve

[Re: "Life-Changing Tips for a More Organized Home," January/February 2015] Nice tip! "Get organized" is one of my 2015 New Year's resolutions, just as it was for 2014...2013...maybe, later, back to 1999! Great article!

—CHRIE, WA3TH3D3H-D3SL3.COM

### Color sample boards

In *Reader Mail*, November/December 2014, a paint pro suggested that rather than painting color swatches on the wall, one can print on large pieces of paper, to be moved around the room. Here's my version. At my builder's supply store, I found 2-by-2-foot pieces of drywall, meant for patching damaged walls. They are inexpensive and, being the same material as the wall, stay smooth and flat and show the color in its truest way. Best part? They can be used over and over again. I've had mine for many years.

—NATHANSON ANDERSON, ALASKA

### HOW TO REACH THE EDITORS

E-mail: [TGM\\_letters@theoldhouse.com](mailto:TGM_letters@theoldhouse.com). Please include your full name, address, and phone number. Published letters are edited for clarity and length.

### Concrete planter

JACQUELYNNE CARBONALE, IL

I have found many projects in TGM to keep my father busy and productive in his retirement! Here's his most recent creation (and mine!) from the March 2014 Weekend Remodel. It was an anniversary gift for me and my husband, so he personalized it with an "F" for "Father" (I find the how-to at [rhoadhouse.com/jan2015](http://rhoadhouse.com/jan2015)).



## STOP DREAMING AND START LIVING

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# Checklist

APRIL 2025

*Easy ways to improve your home right now*

## 6 FAST FIXES

**Keep windows working** As part of National Window Safety Week (April 9–10), inspect your home's windows to ensure none are painted or nailed shut.



**Vis up how you move** Changing direction each time you cut the lawn will help grass blades grow upright, not laid on their sides as you drive.

**Pull weeds after it rains** The softer soil makes it easier to remove the entire root.

**Get the AC ready to work** Give the system a test now so that you'll have plenty of time to schedule a service call if needed before the dogs get booked up.

**Place sprinklers strategically** Make sure you're watering your yard and not your driveway, house or sidewalk, you'll save water and avoid mold and mildew.

**Open seldom-used traps** If guest baths haven't been company is a monthly larger animal, and flush toilets to keep traps from drying out and causing unpleasant odors.

### Start seeds in shells

Make your breakfast work overtime: Biodegradable, calcium-rich eggshells are perfect for seed starting. Carefully remove the top third of the shell, then wash the inside and poke a drainage hole in the bottom. Fill with seed-starting mix and plant seeds following packet directions. At transplanting time, tip the bottom of the shell onto a hard surface to help break it up before placing it in the hole.



### Sanitize garden tools

Pruning damaged growth helps new blooms thrive, but dirty tools can spread disease between plants. Keep foliage healthy by cleaning tools of dirt and grime after each use and sanitizing with a solution of 1 part bleach to 10 parts water.



### Thwart Thumper

If you see clean cuts on the leaves and stems of your plants, rabbits are likely to blame. These critters love

young shoots, so surround gardens early in the season with 2- to 3-foot-tall chicken wire fencing, buried about 1 foot deep. Before buying, bend the fence's bottom facing away from plants to make it harder for rabbits to sneak under.

### Maximize the medicine cabinet

Back efficiency, looking with the off-shoulder space. First, remove everything and use a mild cleanser on shelves. Get rid of any expired prescriptions and even the over-the-counter, multi-use pain relievers. Remove the lower shelves for regularly used items, and store less-used ones in the top. Magnets or hooks on the back of the cabinet door can help untold odds and ends.



PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES; ILLUSTRATIONS: JACQUELINE K. HARRIS



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# home solutions

Edited by Michelle Brunner

INSIDE | CURB APPEAL | GARDENING | LAWN CARE | APPLIANCE UPKEEP | MORE



## Homespun plant stand

Next time you spy an old sewing machine's treadle base at a flea market, think twice before you walk away. These ornate metal supports (\$30 and up on [etsy.com](http://etsy.com)) can be repurposed as charming stands for outdoor containers. Made of durable cast iron, they look great rusted and weathered by the elements. Just mount boards to the brackets of the base with deck screws and set terra cotta pots or a window box on top. Pffft with a lucky bloom for a display that will never go out of style.

▲ Mount & mark in the treadle gives the plan even more personality

PHOTO: JAMES WHITE



## Clever exterior cleaning hacks

Lackluster windows and siding slams can drag down your curb appeal. Remedy such woes with these off-label uses for around the house products. —KATE HALL



**MILDEW SIDING**  
1-cup Clorox Bleach  
1-gal. Water  
Mold on your house? The secret to this household

hero is the superfoaming action of the chlorine bleach, which allows it to easily work into and loosen spots out of vinyl and wood siding.



**DIRTY WINDOWS**  
1-cup Rubbing Alcohol  
1-cup Water  
This lightweight mix is a 360° cleaning hero

with its self-anchoring sponges, and long-reach make ideal for windows as well as floors.



**ONLY DRIVEN IN STAINS**  
1-cup Clay-based  
Jelly-filler  
Superabsorbent clay helps soak up oil splatters

from asphalt. Spread itter over a fresh spill. Wait a day then sweep it up and hose down the spot.



**RUST ON CONCRETE**  
1-cup Acetone  
The magic acid in this cleaner often sold for swimming pools lifts rusty stains

from concrete. Wear gloves and eye protection, dilute 1 part liquid to 4 parts water, then follow the instructions on the label.



## Garden fixes from the kitchen

Find kitchen solutions to your biggest yard woes—for free—in our handy Horticulture expert Melinda Myronchuk's advice on the top tools. —KATE HALL

**To get rid of weeds**  
**USE: White vinegar**  
A vinegar spray will burn plants but won't attack the roots, so expect to do repeat applications on weeds that regrow.

**To banish rot and aphids**  
**USE: Dishwashing liquid**  
These tiny pests suck sap from plants, flowers, and vegetables—basically everything. Mix a few drops of dish soap with water and spray regularly.

**To enrich sandy soil**  
**USE: Coffee grounds**  
The residue from your morning brew will add organic matter and nutrients to sandy soil and increase water capacity. The grounds also improve drainage in clay soil.

**To play slugs**  
**USE: Beer**  
From beer cans a shallow dish can catch the ground. The slugs will be attracted to the fermenting yeast. "It'll take a while they die," says Myers.

**To control powdery mildew**  
**USE: Cooking soda**  
Add 1 tablespoon of baking soda and 1 to 2 teaspoons of horticultural oil to 1 gallon of water. Spray both sides of affected leaves when needed.

**To trap overalls**  
**USE: A paper towel tube and drinking straw**  
Put the cardboard tube with large-diameter straw and place it under a plant where you're watering. The straw will draw the water into the soil. Grab the tube and

cover the ends with your hands. Hold it over a bucket of soapy water and shake the savings into the bucket.

**To repel wildlife**  
**USE: Cayenne pepper**  
Vinegar and oil go well with cayenne and mace. Mix them together and spray them on plants you don't want them touching.



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## Six lawn-care missteps to nix

A lush carpet of green is easy to attain as long as you avoid a few common mistakes. We spoke with Gerald Henry, PhD, associate professor of environmental turf grass science at the University of Georgia, to find out what not to do when caring for a lawn. —NIA KORE



### 1 TRIMMING TURF TOO SHORT

"It's tempting to lop off as much as you can, but make sure to cut off no more than one-third of the blades in a single pass," says Henry. Leaving grass longer helps it process light and water and develop a healthy root system, which in turn leads to a fuller, more attractive lawn.

OUT NO MORE THAN ONE-THIRD OF THE HEIGHT



### 2 FORGETTING TO TEST THE SOIL

Most species of grass are quite hearty, but that doesn't mean they can grow just anywhere. Sending a soil sample to an extension service for testing lets you know exactly what conditions you're working with. "Turf thrives in soil with a pH of 6.0 to 6.5," Henry says. Sulfur or lime treatments can alter the pH to create ideal conditions.

### 3 PLANTING ONE TYPE OF SEED

Selecting the right type of turf grass is key, and planting a variety of species and cultivars helps your lawn become established as the seeds strengthen and weaknesses offset each other. In general, mixtures are more likely to survive adverse weather conditions, like heat and drought, than a single-seed lawn.

### 4 CUTTING WITH A DULL BLADE

If your mower blade isn't sharp, you'll end up with torn or bruised shoots, which can turn gray and then brown, leaving the lawn vulnerable to disease and pests. Expect to sharpen your blade about twice per season. If your mower appears to be pulling or trampling the grass, rather than cutting, its blades are due for a sharpening. For the step-by-step, go to [thisoldhouse.com/apr2015](http://thisoldhouse.com/apr2015).

### 5 BAGGING LAWN CLIPPINGS

Rather than collect newly shown grass, use a self-mulching mower to leave shredded cuttings behind. Think of it as free fertilizer. Anecdotal evidence suggests that returning clippings to your lawn may contribute as much as 2 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet," says Henry.

### 6 WATERING DAILY

Lawns need an inch of water a week. Saturate turf all at once and it will run off, deliver too little and it will never reach the roots. Give grass a third of an inch of water three times a week (set out an empty can to collect it, then measure), in the morning.

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## Pruners for tight spots

Sometimes your regular pruning tools just won't cut it. Here's what you need for some low-fructose pruning: again, a regular, a break, a pop, or a mix. A mix without disturbing a nearby branch. To the rescue: four teen picks that make easy work of cutting in crowded, tight spaces.



### 1 Mini-clippers

Get surgical precision with these 5-inch long pocket clippers, which are perfect for making intricate cuts, such as shaping grafts, stemmed flowers for a bouquet. Hydrex Mini-Clippers, \$5, plantcentral.com

### 2 Scissor-like solutions

These garden shears feature an 8-inch long jagged blade that grips and holds plant stems for a cleaner cut. They're ideal for tougher stems that tend to slide through regular shears. Fisher Garden Shears, \$25, Amazon.com

### 3 Needle-nose pruner

The narrow, slightly curved tip can get into spots where bypass pruners can't quite fit. It's a good for clipping short twigs and thicker perennial stems. Hydrex Curved-Nose Pruner, \$23, plantcentral.com

### 4 Japanese-style pruning saw

This 30-inch blade is non-serrated for pruning shrubs or small tree limbs where loggers don't fit. It cuts on the pull stroke for a cleaner cut with less force. Sunbelt Wide-Taper Folding pruning saw, \$75, gardenmade.com



## Break a bad laundry habit

Why does it feel like your washing machine is just sitting overnight? But if a one-time opus becomes routine occurrence, you just might be shortening the life span of your washer. Here, three habits to rethink. —M. SHUPAK

**YOU OVERLOAD** You may believe you're saving time or conserving water by cramming everything into one wash, but overloading takes the mechanical system of your machine. The telltale sign: loud banging of the drum or tub during the spin cycle. Over time, this can fry the belt or burn out the motor. Stick to the load limits recommended in the user's manual.

**YOU USE TOO MUCH DETERGENT** A liberal pour won't get your clothes any cleaner. In fact, the residue from excess soap makes your threads look dingy, and over-soaking can cause gummed drain issues, and in some cases, leaks. Stick to the manufacturer's recommendation for the optimal amount. Note: Washing with soft water requires even less detergent than with hard water.

**YOU LET A WET LOAD SIT** It takes only 8 to 32 hours for odors to develop on wet clothes, according to the Whitepool Institute of Fabric Science. Damp clothes are a breeding ground for mold, fungus, and mildew, which can rot inside the washer and around the rubber door gasket. If you forget to remove it, wait a bit again, adding a cup of white vinegar

# TURN LAUNDRY TIME INTO **TURBO TIME**



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\*Based on no-loading experiments.



## A stylish home office for \$432

A striped accent wall and a one-of-a-kind desk turn a makeshift space into a welcoming work zone



THE PROJECT TALLY	
Replaced second-hand desk and hutch, then repainted them up with a new paint color	\$130
Added white stripes to the beige window wall with leftover white paint	\$32
Added a new rug in the living room	\$50
Added a new rug in the living room	\$50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$432</b>

**HOME OFFICES HAVE TO WORK HARD.** They need to be efficient and comfortable (but not too comfortable!) and have enough personality to feel like more than just a cubicle. It was a tall order for Sabrina Macdonald's empty guest room, which she wanted to convert to a chic office for her burgeoning graphic design business in Toronto, Ont. Looking to create an office with plenty of workspace as well as charm, Sabrina started with a second-hand desk and a hutch with crown molding that gave it the look of a built-in. Although it provided shelf storage, the work surface wasn't very generous, so Sabrina's husband, Mike, and she hired a local carpenter to build an extension featuring geometric leg design. Bright aqua stain turned the desktop into focal point. Overhead, Mike swapped the plain built-in light fixture for a thrift-shop chandelier that Sabrina painted and embellished with beads and crystals. Stringing the window sill gave the workspace a drapery backdrop. Now, Sabrina says, the room is equipped with the tidy storage and expansive surface she needed, adding, "It's easy to feel inspired and get creative in a room that is so beautiful." —MEGAN BAKER

### THRIFTY, AM I SAY?

Replaced second-hand desk and hutch, then repainted them up with a new paint color. Added white stripes to the beige window wall with leftover white paint. Added a new rug in the living room.

The world is filled with air.



## COPD MAKES IT HARD TO BREATHE AIR. ANORO HELPS YOU BREATHE AIR BETTER.

COPD is chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

### APPROVED USE

ANORU ELLIPTA is a prescription medicine used to treat chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) in adults. COPD is a chronic lung disease that includes chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or both. ANORU ELLIPTA is used long term as a maintenance, 1 time each day, to improve symptoms of COPD but better breathing. ANORU is not used to treat sudden symptoms of COPD and does not replace a rescue inhaler. ANORU is not for the treatment of asthma.

### IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

- ANORU ELLIPTA is only approved for use in COPD. ANORU is NOT approved for use in asthma.
- People with asthma who take long-acting beta<sub>2</sub>-adrenergic agonist (LABA) medicines, such as salmeterol (the active ingredient in ANORU), have an increased risk of death from asthma problems. It is not known if LABA medicines increase the risk of death in people with COPD.
- Call your healthcare provider if breathing problems worsen over time while using ANORU.
- Get emergency medical care if you breathe/feel problems worse quickly or if you use your rescue inhaler but it does not relieve your breathing problems.
- Do not use ANORU to treat sudden symptoms of COPD. Always have a rescue inhaler with you to treat sudden symptoms.
- ANORU is not for the treatment of asthma. It is not known if ANORU is safe and effective for people with asthma.
- Do not use ANORU if you have a known allergy to milk, proteins, or any of the ingredients in ANORU. Ask your healthcare provider if you are not sure.
- Do not use ANORU more often than prescribed.

ANORU ELLIPTA is the first FDA-approved product that contains 2 long-acting, beta<sub>2</sub>-agonists in 1 inhaler. Once daily ANORU helps you breathe better for a full 24 hours. Your results may vary.

In clinical trials, ANORU ELLIPTA helped people breathe air better than SPIRIVA® Handihaler™.

Results shown in 2 clinical trials. Individual results may vary. SPIRIVA contains 1 long-acting bronchodilator and a corticosteroid. ANORU ELLIPTA contains 2 long-acting bronchodilators. ANORU ELLIPTA is not approved to replace COPD flare-ups. Each product has its own risks and benefits.

### Important Safety Information (cont.)

- Do not take ANORU with other medicines that contain a LABA or an anticholinergic for any reason. Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take and about all of your health problems. Tell your healthcare provider if you take anticholinergics including Solinrix, atropine, ipratropium, or albuterol.
- ANORU ELLIPTA may cause serious side effects, including:
  - serious allergic reactions. Call your healthcare provider or get emergency medical care if you get any of the following symptoms of a serious allergic reaction: rash, hives, swelling of the face, mouth and tongue, breathing problems.
  - effect on your heart: increased blood pressure, fast and/or irregular heartbeat, chest pain.
  - effect on your nervous system: tremor, nervousness.
  - serious worsening of problems, including acute narrow-angle glaucoma. Acute narrow-angle glaucoma can cause permanent loss of vision if not treated. Symptoms of acute narrow-angle glaucoma may include: eye pain or discomfort, nausea or vomiting, blurred vision, seeing halos or bright colors around lights, redness. If you have these symptoms, call your doctor right away before taking another dose.
  - urinary retention. It is rare who take ANORU may develop new or worse urinary retention. Symptoms of urinary retention may include: difficulty urinating, pain/burning when urinating, frequently urinating or a weak stream or stop. If you have these symptoms of urinary retention, stop taking ANORU and call your doctor right away before taking another dose.
  - changes in laboratory blood levels: including high levels of blood sugar (hyperglycemia) and low levels of potassium (hypokalemia).
- Common side effects of ANORU include: sore throat, nasal infection, lower respiratory tract infection, common cold symptoms, constipation, diarrhea, pain in your arms or legs, muscle spasms, neck pain, chest pain.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch), or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Read the full Summary of Product Information for ANORU ELLIPTA on the following pages.

SPIRIVA and Handihaler are registered trademarks owned by Boehringer Ingelheim.

ANORU ELLIPTA is an approved collaboration with Theravance.



Talk to your doctor about ANORO. Visit [ANORO.com](http://ANORO.com) and sign up for savings!

Subject to eligibility. Restrictions apply. See ANORO.com for eligibility rules.



GSK for you

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**ANORO ELLIPTA**  
(salmeterol 50 mcg and vilanterol 25 mcg inhalation powder)



Read the Medication Guide that comes with ANORO ELIPTA before you start taking it and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This summary does not include the place of taking to your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment.

**What is the most important information I should know about ANORO ELIPTA?**

ANORO ELIPTA is only approved for use in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). ANORO ELIPTA is NOT approved for use in asthma.

ANORO ELIPTA can cause serious side effects, including:

- People with asthma who take long-acting beta<sub>2</sub>-adrenoceptor agonist (LABA) medicines, such as vilanterol (one of the medicines in ANORO ELIPTA), have an increased risk of death from asthma problems.
- It is not known if LABA medicines, such as vilanterol (one of the medicines in ANORO ELIPTA), increase the risk of death in people with COPD.
- Tell your healthcare provider if breathing problems worsen over time while using ANORO ELIPTA. You may need different treatment.
- Get emergency medical care if:
  - your breathing problems worsen quickly
  - you use your rescue inhaler but it does not relieve your breathing problems

**What is ANORO ELIPTA?**

ANORO ELIPTA contains an anticholinergic, vilanterol, and a LABA medicine, vilanterol.

Anticholinergics and LABA medicines help the muscles around the airways in your lungs stay relaxed to prevent symptoms such as wheezing, cough, chest tightness, and shortness of breath. These symptoms can happen when the muscles around the airways tighten. This makes it hard to breathe.

ANORO ELIPTA is a prescription medicine used to treat COPD. COPD is a chronic lung disease that includes chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or both. ANORO ELIPTA is used long term as 1 Inhalation, 1 time each day to improve symptoms of COPD for better breathing.

• ANORO ELIPTA is not for use to treat sudden symptoms of COPD. Always have a rescue inhaler (an inhaler that

acting bronchodilator) with you to treat sudden symptoms. If you do not have a rescue inhaler, contact your healthcare provider to have one prescribed for you.

- ANORO ELIPTA is not for the treatment of asthma. It is not known if ANORO ELIPTA is safe and effective in people with asthma.
- ANORO ELIPTA should not be used in children. It is unknown if ANORO ELIPTA is safe and effective in children.

**Who should not use ANORO ELIPTA?**

Do not use ANORO ELIPTA if you:

- have a known allergy to anticholinergics. Ask your healthcare provider if you are not sure.
- are allergic to unsaturated, vinylic acid, or any of the ingredients in ANORO ELIPTA. See "What are the ingredients in ANORO ELIPTA?" on next page for a complete list of ingredients.

**What should I tell my healthcare provider before using ANORO ELIPTA?**

Tell your healthcare provider about all of your health conditions, including if you:

- have heart problems
- have high blood pressure
- have seizures
- have thyroid problems
- have diabetes
- have liver problems
- have eye problems such as glaucoma. ANORO ELIPTA may make your glaucoma worse.
- have prostate or bladder problems, or problems passing urine. ANORO ELIPTA may make these problems worse.

- are allergic to any of the ingredients in ANORO ELIPTA, any other medicines, or food products. See "What are the ingredients in ANORO ELIPTA?" on next page for a complete list of ingredients.
- have any other medical conditions
- are pregnant or planning to become pregnant. It is unknown if ANORO ELIPTA may harm your unborn baby.
- are breastfeeding, if it is not known if the medicine in ANORO ELIPTA pass into your milk and if they can harm your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. ANORO ELIPTA and certain other medicines may interact with each other. This may cause serious side effects.

Especially tell your healthcare provider if you take:

- antidiarrheals (including loperamide, prochlorperazine, and others)
- atropine

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

**How should I use ANORO ELIPTA?**

Read the step-by-step instructions for using ANORO ELIPTA at the end of the Medication Guide.

- Do not use ANORO ELIPTA unless your healthcare provider has taught you how to use the inhaler and you understand how to use it correctly.
- Use ANORO ELIPTA exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to use it. Do not use ANORO ELIPTA more often than prescribed.
- Use 1 inhalation of ANORO ELIPTA 1 time each day. Use ANORO ELIPTA at the same time each day.
- If you finish doses of ANORO ELIPTA, take it as soon as you remember. Do not take more than 1 inhaler each day. Take your next dose at your usual time. Do not take 2 doses at one time.
- If you take too much ANORO ELIPTA, call your healthcare provider or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away if you have any unusual symptoms such as worsening shortness of breath, chest pain, increased heart rate, or shivering.

• Do not use other medicines that contain a LABA or an anticholinergic for any reason. Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist if any of your other medicines are LABA or anticholinergic medicines.

• Do not stop using ANORO ELIPTA unless told to do so by your healthcare provider because your symptoms might get worse. Your healthcare provider will change your medicines as needed.

• ANORO ELIPTA does not relieve sudden symptoms. Always have a rescue inhaler with you to treat sudden symptoms. If you do not have a rescue inhaler, call your healthcare provider to have one prescribed for you.

• Call your healthcare provider or get medical care right away if:

- your breathing problems get worse
- you need to use your rescue inhaler more often than usual.

(continued on next page)

- your rescue inhaler does not work as well to relieve your symptoms

**What are the possible side effects with ANORO ELIPTA?**

ANORO ELIPTA can cause serious side effects, including:

- See "What is the most important information I should know about ANORO ELIPTA?"
- Sudden breathing problems immediately after taking your medicine
- Serious allergic reactions. Call your healthcare provider or get emergency medical care if you get any of the following symptoms of a serious allergic reaction:
  - rash
  - hives
  - swelling of the face, mouth, and tongue
  - breathing problems
- Effects on your heart:
  - Increased blood pressure
  - A fast and/or irregular heartbeat
  - Chest pain
- Effects on your nervous system:
  - Tremor
  - Nervousness
- New or worsened eye problems, including acute narrow-angle glaucoma. Acute narrow-angle glaucoma can cause pain, redness of the eye, or blurred vision. Symptoms of acute narrow-angle glaucoma may include:
  - eye pain or discomfort
  - redness or watering
  - blurred vision
  - seeing halos or bright colors around lights
  - red eyes

If you have these symptoms, call your doctor right away before taking another dose.

• Urinary retention. People who take ANORO ELIPTA may develop new or worse urinary retention. Symptoms of urinary retention may include:

- difficulty urinating
- painful urination
- urinating frequently
- urination in a weak stream or drops

If you have these symptoms of urinary retention, stop using ANORO ELIPTA.

and call your doctor right away before taking another dose.

- Changes in laboratory blood levels, including high levels of blood sugar (hyperglycemia) and low levels of potassium (hypokalemia).

**Common side effects of ANORO ELIPTA include:**

- sore throat
- sinus infection
- sudden respiratory infection
- common cold symptoms
- constipation
- diarrhea
- pain in your arms or legs
- muscle spasms
- neck pain
- chest pain

These are not all the side effects with ANORO ELIPTA. Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for more information.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

**What are the ingredients in ANORO ELIPTA?**

Active ingredients: unsaturated, vinylic acid; inactive ingredients: lactose monohydrate (contains milk protein), magnesium stearate.

Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for additional information about ANORO ELIPTA. You can also contact the company that makes ANORO ELIPTA (tell them) at 1-888-625-5246 or at [www.teva-anoro.com](http://www.teva-anoro.com).

ANORO ELIPTA has a registered trademark in the EU and other countries. ANORO ELIPTA was developed in collaboration with Teva Pharmaceuticals.



Qualitest Pharmaceuticals  
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 May 2014  
 ANO-14-0001  
 ANO-14-0002

# Top project for spring:

## How to build a deck



1 Assemble frame



2 Build stairs



3 Add decking

Find this and more at [thisoldhouse.com/build-small-deck](http://thisoldhouse.com/build-small-deck)



## Vintage look, modern function

A contemporary kitchen gets a gut redo—and a turn-back-the-clock style that suits both a 1907 home and a 21st-century family BY AMANDA LUKERS • PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN MELVIN

RENOVATING typically means bringing a kitchen into the now. But in this case, the goal was to go back in time—at least on the surface. “The homeowners loved everything about their 1907 Craftsman home, except for the kitchen,” says Minneapolis-based designer David Hinde. In a house full of mahogany woodwork and art glass, the 1980s “update” with a partial drop ceiling and orange walls stuck out like a sore thumb.

As did the overcast peninsula that protruded into the room. Add in a couple of awkwardly placed appliances—including a cooking nook into the peninsula breakfast bar—and the problem multiplied. To open up the space and reintroduce the room to its past, Hinde reimagined the layout and installed red birch cabinets, open shelving, leaded-art-glass panels, and other Craftsman nods, working with builders Neil Levi/Restoration. “The design integrates state-of-the-art amenities with the timeless spirit of the house,” says Hinde. “Just as important, it makes use of every square inch.”

**BEFORE:** Block countertops and lack of can lights shade the space. **AFTER:** A compact island provides a gathering place and an end-to-end work surface for meal prep—inspired by daughter baking. Red and granite counters, red birch cabinets, and a slate floor evoke a Craftsman look. Dotted line in the archway shows upper cabinets.



BEFORE



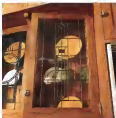
• before • after:  
kitchen



The butler's pantry side of the passageway between the kitchen and the dining room offers more storage. A built-in, wall-mounted dishwasher is a nice modern touch.

Removing a partial drop ceiling allowed for taller doorways topped with leaded glass transoms that admit more light through the kitchen. An art glass window in the mudroom and a view from the kitchen back to the outdoor porch.

Handcut beveled glass cabinet door panels show off dishware and reflect light back into the space. Landscape: David Mader Design Studio



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pro advice DAVID MADER, DESIGNER, WWW.AFOCUS.COM

"Stone countertops may be modern but can evoke a period feel. Choose them first. They're like art—you can then pick everything else to complement them."

before

A large peninsula trapped the cook. Curved cabinets and a partial drop ceiling gave the space a contemporary look.



after

An island with seating burners is a safer spot, and to-the-ceiling storage makes the kitchen more functional and inviting.

1 Traded the peninsula counter for a range and a freestanding island, creating a new spot for breakfast.

2 Removed curved cabinets and added ceiling openings to define the kitchen and adjacent spaces.



3 Moved the range and dishwasher to transoms with the island.

4 Added more storage with built-in built-in high rise of cupboards stacked ovens and a pantry cabinet.

5 Deepened the closet and installed double doors. Added white storage along both, and a dishwasher to the butler's pantry.



The built-in clock, a signature of the designer's old-period style. The backsplash tile was customized to match a vein on the granite counters. Eclecticstyle Power

A window seat is tucked between built-in closets in the mudroom and opposite the butler's pantry.



Cabinets in the sink cabinet were built by decorative potter found in boxes of the period. Custom cabinetry: Ajana Woodworking



## Bathtime oasis

A savvy mom helps perfect a spot for her kids that's comfortable, safe, and just plain fun BY DEBORAH SALDWIN • PHOTOGRAPHS BY DENNY FORD

BY DEBORAH DALLWITZ • PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN FORD

**IF YOU WANT** to design with kids in mind, ask an expert. Former preschool teacher Nadia Babi knew exactly what to put where—and why—when that and her husband, Aaron, added a bath for their boys to their Atlanta, Georgia, house. The job a premium on safety, choosing a low tub, ask friends for help prevent scalding, talk-shower controls out of kids' reach, and scoured floor tile. "The good a dark bathroom, you know, they're boys," says try very proper mother of Treemon, 2, and Hapies, 6 months. Working with HGTV's Design-Draft! during a whole-house redo, Nadia also lobbied for extra space alongside the tub to ease the bathroom routine. "You want to be able to sit in a toilet and turn around without bumping into the sink or the toilet," she says. At first flustered, "I wanted the bath to merge in with the kids, to be fun and cheerful but not childish." A lively paint scheme was a given, but "bath out, if the kids are like, 'Mooos, I'm soooooo tired,'" she says. "I want to see them again." she says. (Bath? Nope, it's not ready.)



1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 2680, 26



**AFTER** A second floor addition gave the kids a room of their own. Single-lever faucets have to be pushed back to switch to cold. Strong finishes and custom window screens reinforce this house's Craftsman style. Faucets: Delta; Closets: Savio House

Capriotti Printing the  
bulk table is a hamper  
before a flip down  
"drawer" for easy  
access. Photo: Garyman  
Moore's Tropical Tux  
(cabinets) and Jack  
Footprints and  
Rally Moore's Direct  
Glass (cabinets)

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your food



**Exhibit this with an afterthought:**  
bush. The 18-inch high bush is  
easy on parents' backs and perfect  
for slapping in and out. The  
*Persea* has a 100% rating.

**Abstract**

after

The 66-square-foot space maximizes function with a double vanity built-in storage, and a tub-shower combo.



(8) A partition wall that thins the tub's alcove adds privacy—and a spot for built-in storage.

2) A 10-lb. rolling stool is better yet and the hanger will also travel and break to overmuch guests.

24 Tuts and verity are I that  
 4. Endless apart that nature  
 1. All those who follow me, I shall

4 A half wall obscures the toilet, provides a hidden spot for the TP holder, and allows a tile backsplash to wrap around the vanity.

54 A went flying window at this new space channel's light to the sink area.

before + after:  
bath

Knickerbockers under the skirt come on deep slits. Textured polyester tile helps prevent slipping. *Vanity Amazona*. Colony: The Office



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paint ideas

## Flaunt your woodwork

A dose of strong color can bring out the beauty of even simple moldings

BY DEBORAH BALLEWIN • PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN GELSON



**WHITE TRIM** and colored walls may be traditional, but here's a case for flipping the formula: To finish this loft-like living space in an 1861 Brooklyn rowhouse, designer Rick Churchill trimmed the walls and windows with orange, leaving the room as well as the view, and painted the built-in bookshelves with the same hue, bringing out the warm patina of the original heart-pine floor. He chose other forthright colors for the millwork throughout the house, making the spaces work with the only whiff of new plaster. In this case, the moldings are "simple but also somewhat elegant, and we wanted them to pop," Churchill says. "When it comes to trim, he obviously goes for an eggshell finish. 'Singletons can be a distraction,'" he says, "while eggshell, being a bit more subtle, helps you focus on the details of the woodwork." ■

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THROW A SHUL  
Churchill's Look



FOUR QUESTIONS FOR

# Tom Silva

This Old House General Contractor since 1986

**Of the many project houses you've worked on in your 29 years at This Old House, which were the most rewarding? The most challenging?**  
The 2001 Manchester-by-the-Sea house and the Cambridge contemporary we remodeled in 2005 were the most difficult and rewarding. Manchester was in rough shape after years of abuse by the elements and some poor design decisions. We were proud to be able to bring it back to its original grandeur. The house in Cambridge was just a small box hidden in overgrown brush when we started, and we transformed it into a gorgeous modern home. You would never have recognized it as the same house!

**What's your best advice to homeowners working with contractors?**

If you have a good working relationship with your contractor, everything else will go smoothly. So take the time to find a builder you feel comfortable with. Do your homework by asking friends, family, and neighbors for recommendations. Then, define, prioritize, and communicate your ideas clearly. Magazine cutouts and digital photos are great ways to get everyone on the same page.

**You have a personal connection to the town of Lexington, Mass. What can you tell us about that, and about the current TOH project there?**

I was born and raised in Lexington, in the same house my mother was born in, that was built in 1765. That house is just a stone's throw away from our project house. Lexington is where I grew up, and where I learned and developed my craft. There's so much history here, but this house is actually a Colonial Revival from 1966—our youngest project house to date. The kitchen hadn't been touched in 40 years. We are working on a big deck and a screened-in porch. And the home owners' three children are all going to get their own bedroom, which they are very happy about.

**Name three projects that remodelers frequently overlook—or fail to invest in—when embarking on a remodel.**

(1) High efficiency heating and cooling. (2) High quality insulation. (3) Casing where the foundation meets the house, and around all the windows and doors, to prevent air leakage. Behind-the-wall projects like these may not be glamorous, but they will make the home more efficient, economical, and durable. They are definitely worth the investment.



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Check local listings or watch at [thisoldhouse.com/watchTOH](http://thisoldhouse.com/watchTOH) and join the conversation #TOHLEX

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## Moravian star pendants

These multifaceted fixtures add some dazzle overhead

BY MEGAN BAKER • PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW MACALEY

THEY REMIND TOM Silva of something that started when he got into paper boats, but that's where these stars are said to have first taken shape: at a 19th-century Moravian church school in Germany, where craft students passed together paper pyramids made of intricate cut-paper polyhedra. By the end of the century, an alchemist of the school began selling the paper stars on his ship, and they soon became popular in Christmas decorations. These inspired new more permanent glass-and-metal lanterns.

Decorating the one-stage lights have become a cottage classic, frequently hung on porch ceilings and inside on inside walls. More sought after than ever, the stars can now be found in their most cutting, layered, steel-and-brass, and even as lanterns. But it's hard to beat the 3-D beauty of the glass pendants. Here, 10 of our favorites all turn a house into a starry-eyed.

### It see through

**Price:** \$1,499  
**Size:** 20" H x 20" W  
**Finish:** clear glass  
**Lighting:** Clear glass, brass. This large 20-inch lantern with a hard frosted glass shade. \$1,499. [shop.com](http://shop.com)

### 2-in-1 vintage pattern

**Price:** \$1,499  
**Size:** 20" H x 20" W  
**Finish:** brass  
**Lighting:** This lantern is to have the look of a lantern and the light of a lamp. The 20-inch lantern is a 2-in-1 design. \$1,499. [shop.com](http://shop.com)





**1- paper star**

Lighted star  
Size: 17" H x 14" W  
\$120  
www.paperstars.com

**2- pearl white**

Lighted star  
Size: 17" H x 12" W  
\$75  
www.1stdibs.com  
This light is made of a pearl white paper and a brass frame, which looks really pretty when the light is turned on.

**3- stained glass**

Lighted star  
Size: 17" H x 12" W  
\$120  
www.1stdibs.com  
This light is made of a stained glass frame and a brass frame, which looks really pretty when the light is turned on.

**4- colorful glass**

Lighted star  
Size: 17" H x 12" W  
\$120  
www.1stdibs.com  
This light is made of a colorful glass frame and a brass frame, which looks really pretty when the light is turned on.

**5- seeded glass**

Lighted star  
Size: 17" H x 12" W  
\$120  
www.1stdibs.com  
This light is made of a seeded glass frame and a brass frame, which looks really pretty when the light is turned on.

**6- antique look**

Lighted star  
Size: 17" H x 12" W  
\$120  
www.1stdibs.com  
This light is made of an antique look frame and a brass frame, which looks really pretty when the light is turned on.

**7- frosted glass**

Lighted star  
Size: 17" H x 12" W  
\$120  
www.1stdibs.com  
This light is made of a frosted glass frame and a brass frame, which looks really pretty when the light is turned on.

**8- gem tones**

Lighted star  
Size: 17" H x 12" W  
\$120  
www.1stdibs.com  
This light is made of a gem tone frame and a brass frame, which looks really pretty when the light is turned on.





# Elegant farmhouse living room

Rustic finds and colorful furnishings set against an airy white backdrop give this space enduring charm. BY KATHERIN O'NEIRA, EVANS • PHOTOGRAPH BY HELEN NORMAN

**THE PAIR NEUTRALS** and weathered woods at the heart of farmhouse style are naturally low-key, but they can still be sophisticated. Take this living room, which designer P. Allen Smith put together on a shoestring for his Arkansas greenhouse. The artful bouquet of beak-on tools above the worn mantel creates a central focal point for symmetrically placed armchairs and wood-framed mirrors. Pillows and place pots in candy-apple red pop against white walls, which Smith covered with painted burlap to look like pricey grasscloth and warmed with salvaged cabinet doors. Want an equally airy look at your place? Read on.

**wooden-paint chair**  
The medallions on this slipcover are echoed in the oval mirrors, providing welcome echoes to a room filled with millwork shapers. **Reinold** \$195, greenwood.com

**blue throw**  
A wrap-in-a-country style has its own laid-back strategy for adding color. **\$56**, wayfair.com



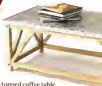
**crimson cachepot**  
Mini galvanized flower baskets painted a rich red and filled with greenery add life to a mantel. **\$14**,amazon.com



**pine mirror**  
A pair of mirrors framed in reclaimed wood draws the eye up, helping highlight the open beam ceiling. **\$140**,shop-pallen-smith.com



**egg basket**  
This genuine fern supply staple makes a stylish receptacle for down-home decor, like Smith's balls of yarn. **\$14**,wrecks.com



**zinc-topped coffee table**  
We painted the wood base of this hand-wearing metal top coffee table a creamy white, then distressed it with scraper and sander. **\$195**,overstock.com



**pillow covers**  
Easy-to-wash cotton and an easy-to-manage price. These covers add a welcome hit of bold red. **\$4 each**,ikea.com



**DIY tool-themed artwork**  
Inspired by cabin shingles, he saw on the wall a 19th-century farmer. Smith affixed his own barn tools with wood screws driven into the shingles and secured them with fishing wire and small leather loops. We found this experiment on Etsy. **\$24 each**,etsy.com



## Bridging the gap

As a young Colonial gets additional space, it also receives a face-lift that feels both contemporary and true to its roots

BY PAUL HOPE • PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTHONY TIERIE

**IT MIGHT SOUND FUNNY** to worry about the architectural integrity of a house that's younger than the iconic Baby Boomer generation, but for homeowners Judy and Jeremy Kervin, preserving the overall identity of their 1966 Garrison Colonial, the project house on this season of *The Old House TV*, was important. "We saw the renovation as an opportunity to improve the curb appeal while staying true to the Colonial style," says Judy.

When the couple bought the home, in the Boston suburb of Lexington, Massachusetts, back in 2011, they knew they'd need to expand in order to create separate bedrooms for their three girls. Adding on above the attached two-car garage seemed like the logical—and economical—way to do that. They signed up principal architect Bill Hubner of local Architects, in Lexington, to design it. "Rather than trying to make this addition look like an extension of the main house, or even like it was built at the same time, we focused on making sure elements looked like they belonged together visually," Hubner says.

Following that strategy, Hubner designed a contemporary asymmetrical front-gabled roof over the garage addition, but, in a nod to the house's style, flanked it with a shed dormer, a common feature of early Colonials. A side-gabled roof over the mudroom on the first floor mirrored the house's roofline and connects the addition to the main house.

The changes to the other half of the facade make the house even more Colonial than it was originally. TOH TV general contractor Toni Silva and his crew built a flower's porch, man-



THE KERVIN FAMILY

### A WELCOMING HOME

ABOVE: The Garrison Colonial in Lexington, Massachusetts, was remodeled for the current season of *TOH TV* to add space for the family of five (INSET). A modified roofline and new living porch better incorporate the secondary entry and two-car garage, which had looked like an afterthought (BEFORE).

**CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY**  
Simple Doric columns evoke early Colonial Revival, but the porch floor keeps the classic painted look. The flowerbeds called for a new color palette that doesn't overdo it.



BEFORE

### WATCH THE MAGIC HAPPEN

Tune in to your local PBS station to catch the new episode of *TOH TV*. To share a new look that has already gone to *House*, visit [www.tohtv.com](http://www.tohtv.com). Up next week in this space: See the fully finished interior of the Lexington project house.



### COME ON IN

The inviting new porch sets the tone for the renovation, while a new bluestone walk leads the way from the sidewalk.

ing one that occupies a single story and spans the width of the house. It connects the Garrison Colonial's idyllic outcave, where the second story overhangs the first, but it also creates an inviting gathering space. The Doric columns further reinforce the Colonial style, as do divided-light windows, simple layered shutters, and clapboard siding.

With the *Hardie* fixed up, the yard needed attention too. A towering cluster of gnarled pines in front shaded a large swath of rock, creating an ideal breeding ground for moss—and not. "And when you've got a tight grouping of trees like that, they prevent other plants from growing," says TOH landscape contractor Roger Cook, who removed the trees

In their place, the Kervins chose a variety of ornamental shrubs, including hydrangeas and a perennal bed of milkberry (Ilex glabra). Keras dogwood trees will fill the yard with beautiful white blossoms in spring.

The finishing touch is a new bluestone walkway, with pavers set in a classic running-bond pattern, that connects the porch to the street. "We no longer have to walk up the driveway. As for the Kervins, they couldn't be more pleased. "We moved to Lexington because it's such a tight-knit community, the kind of place where you can have a spontaneous gathering of friends and neighbors," says Judy. "We finally feel like our house is inviting enough that people will want to stop by!" ■



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTHONY TIERIE





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## Little trees, big rewards

Thanks to an ingenious pruning method, you can grow  
a fruitful orchard in even a small backyard **BY ANN RALPH**

**LUSCIOUS, SUN-RIPENED PEACHES**...crisp, juicy apples...sweet, juicy-red-barked pears. The allure of homegrown fruit leads many of us to plant a tree or two. Problem is, just a few years later, we find we've bitten off more than we can chew with large, challenging-to-prune trees that produce colossal quantities of fruit. Our 'Santa Rosa' plum tree, for example, stands 15 feet tall and wide and produces about 700 pieces of fruit, much of it too high to reach without a ladder, over just a few weeks, same with peaches, pears, and apple trees. That's fine if you're a commercial grower, but not if you just want a few fresh-picked plums.

Luckily there's a simple, innovative way to keep fruit trees at people height, with all the harvest within arm's reach. By relying on a very specific pruning schedule, this method also allows you to grow more kinds of fruit over a longer harvest season in a small area. That same plum tree, pruned in this way, would stand 8 feet tall and 4 feet wide when mature, could be pruned from ground level in about 15 minutes, and might yield 300 full-size fruits by the third year—enough for a small family, with some to share. For all the how-to details, turn the page.

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## get started

**BUYING** Begin with a bare-root sapling, available at nurseries and by mail order from late winter into spring (about \$30 each, depending on the variety). Fruit trees are sold according to their maturity, standard (or full size), semi-dwarf or dwarf, depending on variety. Most fruit trees are grafted: a branch of one tree is grafted to the roots of another, creating a new plant with the best attributes of both. So when you buy a semi-dwarf or dwarf tree, rather than a standard, you're getting a tree that can grow as tall as 25 feet (dwarf) or 10 to 15 feet (semi-dwarf).

**have weak roots.** Instead of selecting trees based on their mature height, choose trees that have a strong root system. Consult a local nursery or cooperative extension office for proven varieties.

**SPACING** The ideal spacing is at least a half day of full sun, and mulched well. Fruit trees will thrive in moderate soil. If your soil is rocky, lacks nutrients, or has a lot of clay, you can plant in raised beds or add organic matter to the soil.



**SPACING** A typical summer-pruned fruit tree can grow to be about 15 feet wide in 10 to 15 years. If you plant two trees on the diagonal, 3 feet apart at center (40). Another option (50) is to plant two trees of any type of trees spaced 3 feet apart at center. Get even more variety with "high density planting" (60) trees, several of the same type of fruit tree with several roots (such as a group of early red and late peaches)—are planted in a single hole, spaced 18 inches apart in center. In all cases, pruning and competition for water and food levels are



## make the cut

Fruit trees require two types of pruning cuts: heading and thinning.



**heading cut** Good for trees that are too tall and too dense. Make a clean cut just above a node or where a leaf is attached.



**thinning cut** Good for trees that are too dense and too tall. Make a clean cut just above a node or where a leaf is attached. This cut allows more light and air to reach the inner branches, which will then grow and produce fruit.



## first pruning

After planting, make a heading cut at an angle just above a node so that the new growth will be high or no taller than 3 feet from the ground. While keeping off the top two-thirds of your new sapling seems harsh, do it anyway—the structure of your tree depends on it. This initial cut creates a sturdy base for the major supporting limbs of the tree. When you cut, be sure to cut at an angle and the trunk will grow no taller. This heading cut and the pruning technique creates branches strong enough to support the weight of ripening produce.

## what to grow

There are hundreds of varieties, such as peaches, apples and pears, that can be successfully cultivated across the country. Maximize your harvest by choosing trees that fruit in succession over the growing season.



**PEAR** Most need the pollen of a second variety on the same-bulb schedule for fertilization. Here are seasonal combinations:  
**EARLY** (late July through mid-August)  
Warren (Zones 8-10) medium size, pale green, juicy, luscious flesh  
Conference (Zones 8-10) medium size, pale green, very juicy, sweet  
**MID SEASON** (late August through early September)  
Bosc (Zones 5-10) medium size, reddish-brown skin, creamy white  
Polaris (Zones 5-10) medium size, pale green skin, white flesh  
**LATE** (mid-September through early October)  
Anjou (Zones 5-10) large size, bright green, firm, sweet, fine-textured flesh  
Bosc (Zones 5-10) medium size, reddish-brown skin, spicy-sweet



**PEACH** These will grow in Zones 4-9 but do especially well in Zones 6 and 7. Most are able to set fruit with their own pollen.  
**EARLY** (late June through mid-July)  
Fourth of July (Zones 5-10) medium size, very sweet, red skin, firm  
**MID SEASON** (late July through mid-August)  
Fry (Zones 5-10) medium size, pale skin, classic high flavor  
**LATE** (late August through late September)  
Nabob (Zones 5-10) medium size, black skin, firm, sweet, juicy



**Apple** Most produce a better yield when pollinated by a second variety. Here are three seasonal combinations:  
**EARLY** (late July through late August)  
Salem (Zones 6-10) large size, red-striped skin, crisp, sweet, tart  
Anjou (Zones 6-10) medium size, pale-red skin, sweet, spicy flesh  
**MID SEASON** (late August through late September)  
Granny Smith (Zones 6-10) large, yellow-green skin, firm, crisp, tart  
Jazz (Zones 5-10) large size, red-striped fruit, firm, juicy  
**LATE** (late September through late October)  
Stepanov (Zones 5-10) large size, red skin, sweet, spicy  
Fry (Zones 5-10) medium size, red-orange skin, crisp, sweet

For more information, check out a copy of *Growing Little Fruit Trees* by Ann Ralph (Storey Publishing, 2000).

## pruning schedule

Late winter is an ideal time to prune for structure and aesthetics, but not for controlling height. Branches grow vigorously in spring. "Lopping" your tree small and skanky prunes June around the summer solstice. By late morning, leafy growth from your tree is put on a diet of early flower buds means less photosynthesis, with decreased ability to add food to the plant. Removing foliage, nutrients and energy along with summer pruning helps your tree stay short.



### STEP 1: FIRST PRUNING

Prune your tree down to a single branch before the initial heading cut (see "First Pruning," opposite), use your fingers to remove all but three evenly spaced buds. These will become the tree's scaffold branches.



### STEP 2: FIRST SUMMER

Remove summer growth that emerges from the scaffold—cut pruning away all but the three branches evenly spaced around the trunk. Head back these branches by one-third, to two-thirds, to an outward-facing bud.



### STEP 3: FIRST WINTER

Prune to open up the center of the tree and remove crossing or crowded limbs. These limbs encourage a weak tree shape. To open growth of inner limbs, head back by two-thirds, to two-thirds of thicker limbs, head back by one-third.



### STEP 4: SECOND SUMMER

You'll have a small, shapely tree that still has growth to die. Head back vertical branches by one-half to two-thirds. These reduce height and encourage branches to grow at 45° angle, horizontal enough to create fruit.



### STEP 5: EVER AFTER

By winter, you can see the tree's shape and maintain it. The final size now depends solely on summer pruning. This created branches instead of a growth that exceeds your reach. Prune in the late February/early





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## Bland, begone

A handsome porch with front-facing steps gives this retro cottage a welcoming new look. BY ANTHONY D. SHERA-EVANS • ILLUSTRATION BY DRUMMONDS INC.



REPORT

**"PLEASE HELP."** Our house feels dated," says Lori Sears Boer of the lackluster 1912 Manual Traditional she shares with her husband, Robert, in Concordia, Missouri. For them, we turned to area architect Matthew Evans.

His first suggestion: a new columned porch, with front-facing steps. "Entering a home from the side makes it feel like the house is answering over you," Evans says. "It should be inviting." To give the facade a look more built, he covered the roof overhangs and added soffits and eaves. Varying finishes—such as shake shingles, clapboard siding, and stone cladding—provide dimension and texture. A colorful palette of yellows with muted red accents gives the house a warm, friendly look. The dated stone-veneer chimney suggests that there's a large fireplace inside.

Lori's reaction? "Wow—it's amazing. We especially love that welcoming new porch."

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↑ Stone veneer is a relatively simple way to add charm to a repeat concrete foundation.

### finishing touches

A few thoughtful touches add up to a big difference in curb appeal.



**window**  
An eye-catching oval shape gives an architectural surprise to this structure's simple facade. Price: from \$1,350

**789**

**house numbers**  
Send-out copper digits are distressed enough to look like they've been around awhile. House of Antiques Hardware: \$25 each



**SCOE**  
Bronze-themed wall lights cost a little, but go on at a fair price. The entry step: Lowe's, \$45



**column**  
Square posts made from low-maintenance PVC are both hand-sanding and handsome. Turnbull: from \$324



## Cubby shelf

Whether it's handmade or ready-made, this wall-mount catchall helps keep a busy entryway neat and tidy

BY THOMAS BAKER • PHOTOGRAPHY: DAVID PRINCE

**NOT LUCKY ENOUGH** to have an entryway with a closet or a guy named James waiting for you when you get home? Then you know how quickly the front hall disappears under heaps of jackets, backpacks, and hats, and how frustrating it is to have to hunt for what you need before heading out. But with a wall-mount organizer standing ready to corral your stuff, you just might get the kids to school on time.

A simple cubby shelf like the one at right, with hooks above for loose items and hooks below for hanging things, makes a terrific DIY project. It uses only eight pieces of wood and needs no fancy joinery—everything is held together with screws and glue.

If you'd rather have someone else build one for you, you'll find plenty of ready-made options in a variety of prices available online. Some are in a plain Shaker style, like the one shown here; others are more dressed up, repainted with crown molding, hand-forged hooks, or beadedboard backs.

Plain or fancy, your cubby shelf will prove every bit as helpful as that James fellow.

Similar to shown: [diyhomeystyle.com](http://diyhomeystyle.com)  
by Project: B.L.B. Weiler.com

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PHOTO: JEFFREY LUTHE/ALAMY

**BUILD IT**

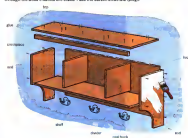
Poplar is a good wood for this project because it's inexpensive, readily available, and takes paint beautifully

**COST** \$40

**TIME** 4 hours

**DIFFICULTY** Easy. Except for the end pieces, all cuts are straight and square.

- 1) Cut the boards.** Use a circular saw to cut all the boards according to the cut list at [thisoldhouse.com/oct12](http://thisoldhouse.com/oct12).
- 2) Cut the curves.** Drive end piece, make a mark on the long edge 6 inches from one corner and on the short edge 5 1/4 inches from the same corner. Place the edge of edge joint at both marks and draw an arc. With both end pieces clamped together, cut along the arc with a jigsaw, then sand the curves smooth.
- 3) Create the cubbies.** Drive the shelf into three equal segments along its length. Using an after square, mark each segment with a dimension line and edge. Glue an end piece against the shelf's unmarked face, flush with the marked edge and centered on the mark. Use the after square to square the divider front to back. Then, using a combination counterbore bit, drill two pilot holes through the dividing line and into the divider. Glue and screw the pieces together. Do the same with the other divider.
- 4) Attach the back and ends.** With the cubby assembly face down, line up the edges of the backpiece with the tops of the dividers and the ends of the shelf. Square the dividers with an after square, bore it to the back's top edge and drill pilot holes through the back and into the dividers and the shelf. Glue and screw the back in place. Align the endpieces flush with the back's top edge and capture its side edges. Glue and screw the ends to the shelf and back.
- 5) Attach the top.** Position the top with a 1/4-inch overhang at the ends and front (flush with the back). Glue and screw the top to the ends, dividers, and back. Glue and screw the endpieces to the ends and pieces and to the underside of the top on up against the dividers.
- 6) Finish and mount.** Cover the screw heads with wood filler. When it dries, sand, prime, and paint the entire piece. Mount the end hooks so that they are evenly spaced below the shelf, then hang it on the wall, within easy reach, using customer kit 3 1/2-inch screws driven through the back and into the studs. Hide the screw heads with plugs.



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[seeburtyc.com](http://seeburtyc.com)



**\$225** the luxury model  
This one-of-a-kind 30-inch-wide piece is built from reclaimed barnwood and sports hand-forged iron hooks.  
[shopgildedwood.com](http://shopgildedwood.com)







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## EVENT SPOTLIGHT

### 2015 International Builders' Show

Las Vegas | January 20-22

The 2015 IMHB International Builders' Show attracted more than 55,000 attendees over the course of three days in Las Vegas. TDIH Master Carpenter Norm Abrams and General Contractor Tom Silva were on hand at this year's show, greeting fans, signing autographs, and answering a variety of home improvement questions.



Tom and Norm sign autographs at the **Lumber Liquidators** booth.



Tom greets fans at the **AZEK/TimberTech** booth.



Norm and Tom stop by for a chat with Mark and Theresa, hosts of the **MyFixUpLife** home improvement radio show.

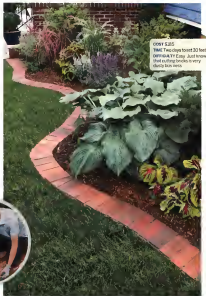
## Edge a garden bed with brick

Use clay pavers to form a tidy border to separate your lawn from plantings. BY THE LHOPE • PHOTOGRAPHS BY SOUL SMITH

### AN ARTFULLY ARRANGED

band of bricks handily defines the boundary between grass and garden. And if you want the bricks flush with the ground, they also serve as a handy mowing guide. You can run the wheels of a push mower right on top of the edging and pretty much dispense with the string trimmer. Some people set the pavers in concrete, but there's no need if you make a proper dry bed. That means digging down just the loose topsoil to prevent frost heave from disrupting the bricks come winter; once you do, laying a bed of compacted paver base and stone that grates the bricks a solid foundation and provides drainage while preventing weeds or roots from coming up. Follow along as *The Old House* senior technical editor Mark Powers guides you through the installation of this functional yard accent.

Brick: Portsmouth, N.H. Severe Weather Products/Bricks 12 cents each  
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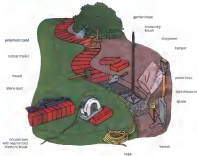


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TIME Two clay-tiled 20 feet  
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that cutting bricks is very  
dirty business.



DAY-TO-DAY  
TIMELINE

**SATURDAY** Form the trench (Steps 1–3)  
**SUNDAY** Set the bricks (Steps 4–5).



TOOLS

rope  
measuring tape  
masonry pencil  
circular saw with a segmented diamond blade  
nail  
water bottle  
tarp  
spade  
tamper  
wheelbarrow  
shovel  
rubber mallet  
masonry brick or paver  
garden hose with nozzle

MATERIALS

clay pavers (severe-weather-rated bricks) Get enough to line your bed, plus 10 percent.  
paver base Get enough to fill 32 to 3 inches (8 to 10 cubic feet) of the bed (1 cubic foot is 1 inch deep).  
stone dust Get enough to fill 1 inch layer (1 to 2 cubic feet) of the bed (1 cubic foot is 1 inch deep).  
polymeric sand A 40-pound bag will do.

1 MAP OUT THE EDGING

**A) Choose the bricks.** Lay a length of rope along the edge of your garden bed, following its contours. Mark the rope at the end of the bed with tape, pull it taut, and measure the rope up to the mark. Divide that length in inches by the width of the bricks to calculate the number you'll need. Then add 10 percent to your order. For example: 324 inches ÷ 4 inches (brick width) = 81 bricks ÷ 10 percent = 89 bricks. Make sure to buy clay pavers; sometimes called severe-weather-rated bricks.  
**B) Scout the curves.** Line the edge of the bed with bricks, tight against the grass line—close to one another but not quite touching, leaving gaps for the sand. To work around soft curves, fan them out slightly. For tight curves, find the center or peak of the curve and leave a triangular gap, as shown. The widest point of the gap should be no wider than a brick.

2 MAKE THE KEYSTONES

**A) Mark the bricks.** You'll make angled keystone bricks to fill the triangular gaps in the curves. Center a brick over tape, divide the masonry pencil mark down where it meets your neighboring bricks, as shown. Mark the opposite end of the brick in the same way.  
**B) Transfer the marks.** Flip the brick over, and transfer the marks from each end onto its face. Use the masonry pencil and a straightedge if necessary, to draw lines connecting the marks at each end of the brick to form your outlines.

**C) Cut the keystone.** With the brick marked, rest it on a work surface with the outlines facing up. Fit the circular saw with the segmented diamond blade. Adjust the depth of the blade so that it'll just barely cut through the brick in a single pass. To minimize dust, backfill water into the tank as you cut. Use the nail to pry open the bottom of the water bottle to create a steady trickle. Set the cut keystone brick into the opening to make sure it fits.

SEE HOW IT'S DONE

1 Search and find out this project, visit the page with the digital step-by-step guide to [thisdiyhomedecor.com/apr2013](http://thisdiyhomedecor.com/apr2013).



3 FORM THE TRENCH

**A) Dig the trench.** Place the tarp over your grass to collect soil as you dig. Using the spade, dig a trench with straight sides along the length of the bed, working from the grass line into the bed. Make the trench several inches wider than the length of your bricks.  
**B) Check the depth.** Dig until the soil changes color, indicating that you've gotten past the topsoil. Measure the depth of your trench, as shown. It should be at least 6 inches deep to allow for a 2- to 3-inch layer of paver base, 1 inch of stone dust, and the bricks set flush with the ground.



## 4 SET THE EDGING

**A) Pack the power base.** Spread the power base evenly throughout the trench, sloping periodically to pack it down with the tamper as shown. Continue to add the material in small batches until it forms a base that is at least 2 to 3 inches deep. If you had to dig deeper than 6 inches to reach just the topsoil, continue to add and pack the power base until the depth of the tampered trench is equal to the thickness of a brick, plus 1 inch for the stone dust.

**B) Mix the stone dust.** In a large wheelbarrow, mix together stone dust and portland cement at a 6:1 ratio, using two shovelfuls of stone dust for every shovelful of cement. Use the garden hose to moist (but not soak) the mixture to activate the cement and make it easier to mix and shovel into the trench.

**C) Lay the bricks.** Working in stretches several feet long, use the trowel to cover the power base with the stone dust mixture. Press the bricks into the mix at a 45-degree, tapping them down with the rubber mallet. Make the face of each brick flush with the ground on either side of the trench and with the brick preceding it. Continue brick by brick, and set the six keystones at curves, maintaining a consistent gap. Use any leftover stone dust to backfill along the back edge of the bricks; then cover it with soil.



## 5 FINISH THE EDGING

**A) Fill the gaps.** With the trowel set, pour polymeric sand over them and ensure the brush to sweep into the spaces between them, as shown. Working your way down the bed, shake the bricks with the rubber mallet to force the sand to pack tightly. Continue to fill the gaps until the sand is flush with the faces of the bricks and won't settle any farther.

**B) Hone off the edging.** Brush away any excess polymeric sand or dust, either one can stain the brick if it gets damp. With the hose, wash the edging with a gentle spray. Guttering the sand between the bricks without dislodging it. As the sand absorbs water, it will set, acting like gravel to lock the bricks in place for years to come.



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1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500





# THE COTTAGE OUT BACK

**A NEGLECTED FREESTANDING GARAGE GOES FROM STORING JUNK TO SPOILING GUESTS**

BY DEBORAH DALLWIN  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KELLER + KELLER  
STYLING BY MARY MOORE

Cedar shingles covered by the salt air; window brackets torn away from the 18th-century main house; a sunny kitchen; and a shady site give the former garage a storybook look. The entry lights and east over front steps are salvaged finds. Paint (Benjamin Moore's Garden Gnome) (here)

➔ **A FABULOUS HOUSE IN A FABULOUS location can be a mixed blessing. On the one hand, you know exactly what you'll be spending your spare time. On the other, so does a lot of your friends and relatives.**

Faced with just this situation, Marilyn and Brian Thompson, owners of a home just steps from the water on Cape Cod, in Massachusetts, cast a furtive eye on a dilapidated garage hovering behind their Victorian-era home. "While previously it had assumed 'hardcore,' it now was 'potential guest suite,'" it now says.

The garage, they learned, had come with a significant perk. Built around 1960, it was grandfathered under tough setback requirements that had gone into effect since. "Tearing it down would have been legal," Marilyn explains, "but building a new structure, no this size lot, would not." In order to destroy it, you might say, they had to save it.

"It was a dreadful sight," says Marilyn,





Decided down vintage treyplings, collected over time, give the open first floor a lived-in feel.

recalling the first time she returned inside. Though it had a classic garage door, it didn't hold cars for a while. Instead, a bath and an antiques room took up the first floor, picked by stars to a dusty attic crash pad. The previous owner had rented out the space in summer while using part of the first floor to dump stuff he might need someday—for something.

Granted, a real cover would require work, but the new owners were already starting themselves for a redo of the house, a wonderful old clapboard cottage that needed, among other things, a new foundation. Marilyn had assembled a team for the big job: preservation-minded architect Julia Kahn, veteran general contractor Tom Hague III, and interior designer Tina Lalonde. Why not tackle the garage too?

Creating a hallway with curving details like a salvaged iron doorstop proved as compelling as building out the big house, and the former garage was soon prepped for the full

English-cottage treatment, from cedar shingles to overlooking window boxes.

But first, some bodywork. The garage was sitting on a slab base suffering from the same drainage issues as the house, complete with soggy old pipes and siding. "The walls were leaning out, there was no real foundation on it," says a beaming Hague.

When Marilyn suggested picking the thing up, moving it back a few feet, and rebuilding a board by board, Hague was agreeable. It helped, she says, that once the garage door was gone, "you could have lifted it with two fingers."

Well, almost. First, Hague's crew sliced through the old pipes to loosen the house from its concrete slab, so it opening an aster. "We braced it well—diagonal 2x6s, inside and outside—and put a on rollers," says Hague. Did he mention that, then all this, he stripped the old structure to its studs?

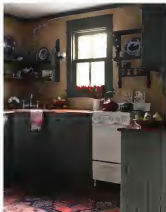
Before sliding the skeleton back in place, the crew dug a hole in a slightly different spot

and poured concrete for a basement. "Then we built a floor and reinforced it with a steel beam," Hague says, "and rolled the frame back in place."

The team had varying notions about how to turn the remains of the garage into a cottage worthy of Hessel and Greenly Cape Cod cottages. Along with a traditional facade, Kahn favored an open living space and steamy guest suite wall. Marilyn secured a balcony off the bedroom, at the gable end facing the house, where guests could lean over and soak a peak resident's see about lunch.

Hague quietly opposed the idea of placing support columns under the balcony, as originally planned, plotting instead to cantilever it off steel flush plates embedded in the second floor. As lifelong scavengers who think nothing of poking off the road to pick up an abandoned cabinet, Marilyn and Lalonde had already scored up vintage support brackets for the balcony. Hague gamely reinforced them with steel inserts and up they went,

BELOW The kitchenette is warmed up by painted beadboard, ceiling of brackets—some turned upside down—drivings faucet, and an Oriental rug. Paint: Benjamin Moore's Cornwell Green (cabinets) and White (walls). Photo: (wall)



## FLOOR PLANS

The former garage came with a bath downstairs and an attic. The first floor was opened up, and a dormered bedroom was added upstairs, along with a half bath. The 676-square-foot guest cottage now has a balcony that overlooks the main house and a liver room (not shown) for ping-pong and storage.

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR







along with a mixing of square and round baisters perched with beery custom...

Equal attention was paid to the front of the cottage, which faces a side street from a self-effacing distance. "We put the shed dormer over the front door, which is flanked by two windows, so it's got a simple, symmetrical shape. It works nicely with the existing house," Kahan says. The most little facade boasts two types of shingles, dormered and straight-sided, "which breaks down the scale and causes your eye to where they meet," Kahan says. Windows were etched to the house's but painted soft green, bowing to the main structure's more far east where while working a bit into the foliage.

Hague says the hardest part: inside was engineering the stairs, partly because the 256-square-foot second floor had to accommodate a stair landing, a door to the balcony, and Maudslayi's thoughtful request for a half bath. To fit the pieces together just so, while also retaining credit, Kahan designed a windowed stairwell with steps that descended and went around to step down at the front door. Hague built it with three types of wood, and Kahan finished it in two

shades of green. Nearly trimmed half an inch and lots of beadboard and crown molding give the little cottage a lapidary, grown-up look. Lath-and-plaster salvaged from the kitchen are cottage-style. "We didn't want the cabinets to be too nice," Marilyn says of their desire for a home there, not to remember how long effort.

She furnished the rest of the guest suite with gutted-over-rose-kids like a deep armchair coiled from the family's former place nearby.

"The cottage has its own front porch and a little stone wall, and you can see out there," Marilyn says. But often she prefers to curl up inside this cozy getaway all on her own, after the summer season subsides. "I take a glass of wine and sit over there in the big chair," she says. "And I think, This is about all I really need—and this little house." ■

**LEFT:** In the main bath, beadboard and a salvaged oak table—the cottage's spirit. **BELOW:** The staircase with a half bath and a large window. **ABOVE:** A salvaged wooden porch and a chair. **RIGHT:** A salvaged wooden porch and a chair. **ABOVE:** A salvaged wooden porch and a chair. **RIGHT:** A salvaged wooden porch and a chair.



The upstairs is a simple, rustic and light. Through a glass and window and a glass and window, tucked in one corner is a tiny half bath. **PAINT:** Benjamin Moore's White Dove (walls), Caroline's Green (trim and island), Gray Cashmere (headboard), and Rustic River (floor).





A  
LOCATE THE  
PHOTOS ON  
THE GARDEN  
PLAN, PAGE 69

# DESIGNED TO DELIGHT

HOW ONE LANDSCAPE PRO TURNED HIS HARDCRABBLE  
SURROUNDINGS INTO A LUSH, ROMANTIC GARDEN WITH LITTLE  
SURPRISES AROUND EVERY CORNER



by David Martin • photographs by Matthew Brown



...GETTING A sense  
and depth off the  
delving support to  
something about the  
and then the way to  
about the garden.  
THIS PAGE: The angel  
also inside the garden  
with a little bit of  
and then the way to  
about the garden.  
about the garden.



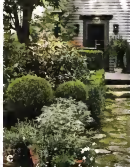
# IT TAKES

It takes a deep well of imagination—and a solid amount of experience—to look at scrubby evergreen outcrops rubbing up against a cragged 1850s home built around a hill and to envision what unfolds there today, a series of dreamy outdoor rooms and secret gardens, hidden by hedges and connected by winding paths. Happily, landscape designer Wesley Rouse, who calls this refuge in western Connecticut home, is just that kind of visionary. After more than 40 years of continuous planning, plotting, and pruning, he now has the garden that first took shape in his mind's eye, one that serves his practical needs and also captivates the senses.

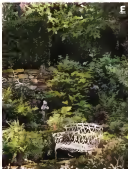
Then, before he moved back to his native state after buying the property, Rouse had an ambitious agenda for the landscape and a wish list longer than

## THE PLAN

Landscape designer Wesley Rouse divided his extensive lot into a series of intimate rooms, adding flights of stairs to connect the different levels.



LEFT: Rouse extended the side-door screen and raised the sidewalk by a couple of feet to create a generous outdoor vestibule tucked with hedges. Peering out the door, he sees a lovely wall of plants instead of the runway a typical walking view creates (C). RIGHT: There are many small gardens on the property; this one has a turning path that isolates visitors from the driveway to a shady area. The entrance is marked by posts filled with spiky-leaved Zealand flax, fuchsia, sweet alyssum, and clematis, all encased in this Zone 6 garden (D).



a country mile. He wanted cozy spaces for lounging and dining, fresh herbs for clipping just outside the kitchen, the seductive sounds of trickling fountains, and everything that's needed to have the wild birds he loves—all in a setting that would screen out nearby neighbors and road noise. Like most avid gardeners, Rouse's inclination on day one was to grab a shovel and dig in. But he wisely resisted the urge, taking the long view, budgeting his money, studying the space, and setting priorities for the property. "It's a good idea to allow some time to figure out traffic patterns and be sure of what you need for the way you live," he says. "Living with your space will also allow you to become familiar with the light patterns throughout the year so you can consider when you want to be in the sun and when you don't."

The first order of business was the clearing, hard work no one much likes to do, clearing, cutting, and culling evergreen plants in order to create much-needed structure. The landscape had been left untended for years and was overgrown with enthusiastic but unworkable plants, such as multiflora roses, maple saplings, and assorted "botanical thugs." Clearing exposures of unwanted plants took a few seasons. Restoring the urge to bulldoze the place

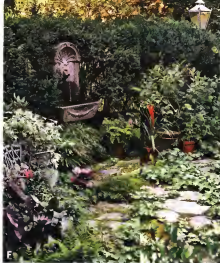
LEFT: Shaped with thick walls, this room off the house's floor shows how effective elevation changes can be. "Simply sinking a room into the hill makes it more interesting," says Rouse (G).



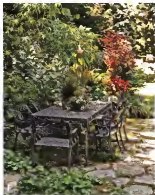
close, Rose reserved carefully around mature trees that had potential. Although they required maintenance, these stands of white pine, Norway spruce, and hemlock proved invaluable in absorbing the sounds of road traffic and creating a privacy screen from neighbors just a stone's throw from his property lines. He guided these existing trees with a new layer of shrubs and more trees, including flowering dogwoods, Japanese lilies, and flowering embellishers, their solid color and mature size as they help to further seal the noise. "Rather than build fences," says Rose, "I install bridges."

Once the rough outline for the landscape went in place, it was time for the fun part: making the actual garden. A much-sought-after designer, Rose turned the tables on himself and used the same process for planning his landscape that he uses when working with clients. "When I find new clients, I suggest they list their wishes in outdoor activities, and then I find ways for the landscape to accommodate their needs." In his own case, this meant space to satisfy his passion for outdoor activities as well as his wife's wish. While he recreates at the house, adding bedrooms, bath rooms, a living room, and a screened porch, he made certain that every door leading outside was given a corresponding garden space.

As always, there were scale and traffic-flow considerations to get right. "You want privacy, but you also need to make outdoor rooms big enough to serve their function comfortably. There's a tendency to make such spaces too small," says Rose. To avoid that common error, he left room for



**FAIR LEFT:** Potted tropicals such as impatiens and lilies are used to fill the garden when the weather warms and are moved into the landscape of partial shade during periods, bearing seasonal color. "I use every color except orange and orange red," says Rose of the garden beds. "Red and purple merge with blue, yellow, and white just fine." **LEFT:** Rose, with his golden retriever, Burnie, relaxes on a stone bench cleverly painted gray to hide into the foliage (1).



**FAIR LEFT:** Last, Rose didn't begin to describe the larger terrace behind the house where the controlled chaos of dozens of varieties of plants is contained by walls of dwarfed shrubs. The said stone-boulder area across from the screened porch, creating a focal point **LEFT:** The well-kept lady's mantle moss, and modern lawn is encouraged to self-weed profusely between irregular flatstone pavers. The cast-iron dining table and chairs set the scene for dinner under the stars (2).

"hallways" between destinations. Natural stone retaining walls shoulder the hillside grandly, and the stone terraces—constructed of New England granite and Connecticut fieldstone—facilitate gradual, subtle changes in grade, connecting the multiple levels of the landscape. Nestled beside all the stone are shrub plantings, with containers used thoughtfully to stem visitors to transitions.

The flowing design of the garden moves meanders comfortably from space to space but always returns to the main action. The back yard, doing space for the most action. The larger of the two is conveniently positioned off the back door of the house's screened-in porch. Paved with irregular-shaped field stone, this patio is enclosed by graduated tiers of horizontal slabs, with garlands of ivy scrambling up the tiers and spring, and summer-flowering vines such as honeysuckle around the patio. It's a dead end for the season, complete with an ornate dining set that suggests Victorian era tea room, a small bench in a rustic style tucked into a corner, fragrant flowers, and a smoking lounge. This is where Rose can be found on most warm summer evenings. Mornings are spent on the small walled space of the master bedroom. Edged with low brick garden, the room boasts a second, smaller screen area and leads to a blueberry-lined hedge to one of the two outdoor ovens.

It is in these outdoor rooms that you see the subtle hand of a designer at work. Of the many ideas begging to be borrowed from this expansive garden, two are especially notable. First, throughout all the spaces or near the





house, Rouse planted shrubs, such as boxwood, rhododendron, dogwood, mock orange, and cherry laurel, instead of flowering perennials because, as he explains, "green stabilizes the eye and creates a backdrop for color." Against this soothing tapestry he added large, lavishly planted containers to provide a scale shift, bringing the eye down from all the surrounding foliage. In spring, those pots host peonies, magnolias, tulips, ranunculus, African daisies, gerberas, monkey flowers, bachelor's buttons, and other annuals as a mix of hues. Later in the season, when the weather warms, he swaps in begonias and other tropical plants to accent. "I used hedges to create the borders, then added informality and busyness within with flowering plants, groundcovers, and moss, always with an eye toward strong contrasts and colors," Rouse says.

Farther away from the house, the garden spaces transition from easy rooms to more contained areas, such as the verdant shade garden where Rouse placed woodland groundcovers between planters and added moss-green, moss-like sculptures to mix in with the forest-floor scene. Across the driveway, another series of manicured rooms radiates out from a central path and meander into spaces hidden by copes of shrubbery. Here he planted thick stands of ornery, dependable shrubs, including rehydrated Korean blue, bluebeard, and butterfly bush, chosen for their all-season performance



H



G

**LEFT** Sheds of New England granite these shrub-lined wanderers leave the dining areas to the shade garden. Planters filled with a compelling combination of spiky heuchera and ferns all step stone walls. The house, since white, is now first blue-gray to blend with the garden (2) **ABOVE** Rouse backs small stone and concrete planters here and there to create the charming, unexpected focal points in the shade garden's sort of the house, a shed of Mongolian granite makes itself at home (3)

**EASY-CARE TREES**  
A good strategy Rouse's garden for top performing shrubs from this page with the biggest impact on the landscape is to use the following:



G

One path transitions through an archway, a simple pergola that Rouse made extraordinary by clad it with lattice curtains and/or to create a scaffolding for a sumptuous collection of climbing vines, double-dwarfed waterfalls, and male variegated kinko trees.

While the outdoor spaces feel private, they also offer views. Having a lawn was never high up on Rouse's wish list, but, like many homeowners, he had a specific field to incorporate. That necessity provided his one excuse to put in a modest lawn surrounded by screening shrubs, including false cypress, pines, and magnolias. Taking care not to insert woody plants with particularly thirsty, water-seeking roots that might compromise the septic system (such as willows and some maples), he enjoys all the advantages of a green screen with none of the pitfalls.

The resulting landscape is pretty much heaven, not only a sanctuary for the landscape designer and his partner but also one that nurtures wildlife, especially those leaping for wading vipers. By thoughtfully incorporating the shelter, water, and food that draw wild birds close, Rouse encourages these feathered friends come in droves and stay. Everyone has his own definition of paradise, of course. "For me," he says, "heaven is going outside for a meal and being surrounded by looking from the bushes nearby." ■

**ABOVE** An outdoor aviary that shelters a pair of doves can be spotted from the master bedroom. To keep from blocking the view of the aviary and the densely planted perennials borders that surround the house, Rouse chose large-scale plants with a low profile of blue flowers and pink New Guinea Impatiens (2)



# How the Pros Cut Costs (Not Corners)

38 insider tips for a better-looking, better-functioning home



Professional designers, contractors, and tradesmen aren't so different from the rest of us: They appreciate saving a buck too, whether they're working on their own homes or have budget-minded clients to please. So we asked veteran remodeling pros to unpack their tool kits of resources, shortcuts, smart advice, and clever tricks for upgrading a space without breaking the bank. Here, their insider secrets

## In the kitchen

**1. Check out lower-grade granite slabs when shopping for countertops.** Fall in love with a top tier stone? Often there's one that's nearly identical at a lower price. You may find essentially the same look that a high-priced Georgia D slab has in Group C for \$2,000 to \$3,000 less. "There's nothing inferior about the quality of a lower grade stone," says Karen Richmond, a kitchen designer in Portland, Oregon. "It's probably just from a quarry in South Dakota instead of Brazil."

**2. Skip pricey LED under-cabinet light fixtures if they require running new wiring.** Instead, go for LED adhesive tape lights and save up to \$100, including labor. Available at home centers, these peel-and-stick flexible LED circuit-board

strips come in various levels of brightness and can be cut to length. Best of all, they plug into any outlet, such as one for a wall-mount microwave or an over-the-range vent hood. "Add a plug-in radio-frequency remote-control unit, and there's no rewiring needed," says contractor Dean Bennett, of Castle Rock, Colorado. To try, Annacost Lighting 12 Foot LED Warm White Tape Light, \$70, [homedepot.com](http://homedepot.com).

**3. Before sinking big bucks into a kitchen remodel, factor in how long you'll live in the house.** Pricy upgrades like some countertop make sense even if you expect to move in just a few years, because the quality is easy for buyers to see, says Susan Seres, a kitchen designer in Huntington, New York. But consider passing

By Josh Ganshof  
Illustrations by Adam McQuay



on custom cabinets unless you're staying put for at least 10 years. "Stock cabinets could save you \$20,000 over custom," says Serra, "and many buyers probably won't fully appreciate the difference."

**4. Hire an e-design firm for professional help without the fancy fees.** Working with a designer is likely to result in a better-planned project—and a better return on your investment. At [homopolish.com](http://homopolish.com) or [GraphicHelp.com](http://GraphicHelp.com), you can contract with a kitchen designer or an interior decorator for \$50 to \$200 an hour; you might need only a few hours of her time. Look for one who is affiliated with ASID or NKBA, and whose portfolio you really like.

**5. Consider open shelving instead of standard upper cabinets.** Sleek and floating, supported by painted wood brackets, or made from salvaged planks, they offer storage space that can amp up your kitchen's style. Depending on materials used, you could easily save half the price of installing cabinets with doors.

**6. Use pricey tile sparingly to get a custom-backsplash look for less.** Run a single course of premium stone or glass tile horizontally, two-thirds of the way up from the bottom of the backsplash, filling in with lower-priced field tile. Fifty square feet of glass tile, [metallite.com](http://metallite.com) cost \$3,000, use a fraction of that and save a bundle.

**7. Work in some furniture to boost your storage capacity.** Rather than choosing a built-in pantry cabinet, try an antique store for a freestanding one. "In many regions, antiques have come way down in price due to the economy," says Serra. You might find a buffet or hutch for \$1,000

to \$2,100 less than what a cabinet maker would charge.

**8. Invest in top-of-the-line hinges and glides, and save on knobs and pulls.** You need hardware for mechanical parts to avoid the test of time, but almost any style of decorative hardware can be found at an affordable price. Spend \$4 for a home-center knob rather than \$15 for a designer one, multiply that outlay by the 40 knobs in a typical kitchen and you're \$600. Get a designer touch by varying the material or finish on an island or between upper and lower cabinets.

**9. Skip pro-style appliances.** Today's mid-priced ranges offer plenty of power, convenience, and stainless-steel-good looks for \$10,000 to \$20,000 less than their pro-style counterparts. Says Serra, "That's a lot of money you can invest elsewhere in the kitchen."

**10. Paint kitchen walls before installing cabinets and backsplash tiles.** That way you can simply roll the walls without having to cut in around the cabinets, saving time and protecting the new woodwork from brush marks. Even with touch-ups after the install is complete, this order of work speeds up the job, saving you \$200 or so in labor costs.

**11. Add recessed lights over your kitchen island when pendants are being hung.** Lighting pros recommend three levels of kitchen illumination: ambient (recessed or track-mount), accent (hanging or pendant), and task (under-cabinet). If an electrician is already working on wires for pendant lights, consider adding wiring for recessed cans at the same time—and save yourself

the cost of a second service call, says gem San Francisco lighting designer Judy Fritschel.



**12. Consider semigloss paint on walls in a back or basement stairwell used by kids.** Yes, it's shiny, but it's also ultra-washable, prolonging the life of the paint job by several years. Invest in top-quality paint, and you'll save hundreds over the long haul.

—RICH MACEY/LUMA, A PROPRIETOR AND WALLPAPERER IN WATERSBURY, CONN.

**13. Never call in pro help for a single small job.** Keep a running list of projects so that when you have a plumber, electrician, or handyman, you can give him a group of tasks. Keeping him on the site longer may cost more up front, but you'll save the typical \$40 to \$80 minimum cost per visit each time he comes back.

—J.B. SASSAND, CEO OF MR. HANDYMAN A SERVICE IN ANN ARBOR, MICH.



**14. Use diagonal tiles as a focal point, not to cover an entire backsplash or floor.** "Angling tiles has a huge impact on the installation cost," says Bennett. With a diagonal design, every-edge tile—around the perimeter of the installation, around obstacles, and against any inset or border tile—must be cut. That increases material costs by 10 percent and labor by about 200 percent.

## Around the house

**15. Save painted wood doors that have been cut down for carpet.** It's easy enough to extend the bottom. Lay the door across two sawhorses, glue and screw a strip of MDF or the same wood to the bottom rail in the added thickness you need. Fill the joint with wood putty, sand flush, and paint. Depending on the door style, you could break \$300 to \$400 for the cost of each replacement.

**16. Cut lighting costs by opting for light-colored walls and floors.** You'll get more mileage out of every lumen by bouncing around the available light and need 20 to 30 percent fewer light fixtures in a room.

**17. Make less-expensive carpeting feel more luxe by upgrading the pad.** Upgrade from a ⅜-inch foam pad to a ⅞-inch one and save the

\$200 to \$300 price tag of a plush carpet. "And unless you're installing a berber or other low-pile carpet, don't let a salesman talk you into a high-density pad," says flooring expert Matthew Glaser, of Lomerville, Kentucky. "It means a stiffer ride and will wear out the carpet more quickly." In general, you should opt for a 6-pound pad instead of an 8-pounder.

**18. Choose a fully enclosed insert if you're putting in a gas fireplace.** These have glass fronts and door-like metalwork, and a fan and vents to send warm air into the house instead of up the chimney. Enclosed inserts put 85 to 99 percent of their heat into the living space, so you stay warm while burning less propane or natural gas than with inserts that have openable glass doors. You'll pay \$2,000 for a heat-producing insert, installed—an investment that pays for itself over time with lower heating bills.

**19. Stick with pure-white ceilings and a single off-white trim color.** You'll save \$200 to \$400 if you're paying a pro to paint multiple rooms, mostly in paint costs because in labor for brush and roller cleanup.

**20. Install occupancy sensor switches where lights are frequently left on.** Garages, basements, bedrooms, playrooms, and

kids' bedrooms are likely spots. These switches house a motion detector that recognizes when the room is empty and shuts off the light automatically, then turns them on again when you enter. You can set a 1-minute delay for places you move through quickly or up to a 15-minute delay to leave a room shut off in living spaces. Each switch saves about \$13 a year in electricity, install a few, and by year two you could be saving hundreds.

**21. Slash the cost of a new hardwood staircase.** Convert carpeted stairs to hardwood or give them, damaged stairs and stairs a fresh look by wrapping them with prefinished overlays, says Glaser. The glass-down overlays are made of solid hardwood and cap existing treads and risers (once any carpet has been removed they come in three pre-cut lengths, four hardwood species, and several finishes). You'll save 30 to 50 percent the cost of replacing stair parts. One roll-out tread





**22. Add wallpaper as an accent.** Use it on just one wall of the living room, for example, or to wrap the chimney box, and save as much as \$500 in materials costs alone. —RICH MAGEY/UNAS WATERBURY CONN

and primed four-paint rivet costs \$10 to \$70, depending on length, starcoating.com.

**23. Reuse still-sturdy kitchen cabinets** in a garage or closet instead of tossing them. Remove the doors, paint the boxes, and as long as they're modular cabinets—pre-made boxes that are unattached to each other and can stand alone—they're easy to relocate. You could save \$5,000 compared with buying new units to fill space with 10-foot run-of-base and top cabinets.

**24. If you're hiring a general contractor, get at least three bids—and let each GC know.** The idea isn't necessarily to choose the lowest bidder—you want the one with a great reputation and portfolio and with whom you feel comfortable. But by creating competition, you ensure each offers the best possible price; you could save 5 percent or more.

experts while still saving 10 to 20 percent, says Rob Weese-Harris, a design-build contractor in Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey.

**27. In exchange with 100-watt service, stick to Energy Star appliances and HVAC equipment.** This can keep your energy bills in check and could prevent the need to upgrade to 200- or 300-watt service, a \$1,500-plus job.

**28. Get whole-house smart controls without the \$5,000-plus tab for a hardwired system.** Check out Lutron's new Casa line, suggests Pfendrich. Starting at \$300 to \$1,500, you can get a system that uses wall switches that retrofit into your existing boxes, and plug-in adapters for your lamps that work with numerous bulbs, including dimmable LEDs. Control your lighting, programmable thermostat, and even motorized window shades using dedicated remotes or an app installed on your smartphone or tablet (lutron.com).

## On the outside

**29. Concentrate color in a small area to help you landscape a big yard over time.** Lessen plant colors—and choices—for a big impact display on a limited budget. Instead of using five different colors, for instance, plant one large group of the same color deeply to build volume and mass. "Using color to create one focal point can help divert the eye from unlandscaped areas," says Scott Designs, a garden designer in Ojai, California.

**30. Choose native plants or ones that are adapted to your climate.** These will require less water and fertilizer to thrive in your

area. You could save \$30 per plant over 30 years and, since they're more likely to survive drought and neglect, possibly replacement costs too.

**31. Fill vertical space: your landscape—without paying for privacy trees—with hanging plants.** "Most plants that can live on the floor of a garden can be hung from a trellis or a post," says Dugan. Such vertical elements can create a sense of scale in the landscape for perhaps 30 percent of the cost of a tree.

**32. Don't just fill the yard with flats of affordable plants.** It's far better to have a plan, buy a few high-quality specimens at a time, and build a garden gradually than to try to save money by putting in lesser-priced plants all at once. Adds Dugan, "Negative space can be beautiful if nicely matched."

**33. Save on outdoor lighting by spacing out pathway fixtures.**

Place lights 8 feet apart rather than 3 feet. The idea is to lead the eye down the path, not create a runway, says David Diaz, a nurseryman in Lake View Terrace, California. Do this and you'll need one-third fewer fixtures, a savings of 30 percent.

**35. Don't assume you have to rip out oversize plants.** Assess whether they can be cut back hard to regenerate at a smaller and more manageable size, pruned into tree-like standards, or simply transplanted. Much of the cost of large plants stems from the years they take to mature, pushing rather than recycling is like throwing money in the trash.

**36. Use stone or gravel for mulch.** Rocks make a beautiful and cost-effective weed barrier that, unlike organic mulch, doesn't need annual reapplying. One cubic yard of crushed stone pea gravel costs about \$55 and can last for up

to a decade, the same amount of organic mulch will set you back \$40 each year.

**37. Get all the plants you need for a new landscaping project—the first time.** You'll avoid special-order charges—and a shortfall—by calculating how many of each type of plant to buy before you head to the nursery. If you're unsure of quantities, bring along the dimensions of the space you're landscaping, the staff can figure out what you need. Nurseries often charge 20 percent or more for special orders—and that's if they can even get the additional stock.

**38. Head to the back of the nursery to get a deal and bag a treasure.** That's where you'll find the stragglers—plants too limited in quantity to warrant a prime place up front but usually in good condition. According to Diaz, savings here are typically at least 10 percent. ■

## 34. Plant small-size specimens.

Sure, investing in large plants can create an instant privacy screen, but if you landscape with a fast-growing variety and wait for plants to fill out, using smaller ones can save you \$10 to \$20 each.

—ROSS MASTROPIROCCO,  
A VETERAN LANDSCAPER  
IN MEMPHIS, TENN.





# “A month of wasted labor flashed before my eyes”

The tattered 1920s house looked like a simple drywall-and-paint job—until it revealed some deep, dark secrets. But 18 months of scrapes, surprises, and delays later, this determined couple moved into their updated bungalow gem.

**It wasn't the most romantic activity** for newlyweds, but there we were, neighbors in hand, taking down a wall in our new home. I pulled off a large chunk of the interior wall we'd started with, and Rachel and I peered up inside the hole. We looked at each other, then up again. We couldn't take our eyes off of what we saw.

Rachel, whose father is a carpenter, knew trouble when she saw it, but even I could tell something wasn't right. The ceiling joists weren't resting on top plates—they were just nailed to the tops of the walls' 2x4 framing. The only thing keeping that ceiling up was three layers of broad-board paneling and drywall inside and, we later learned, three layers of siding. We were lucky the ceiling hadn't fallen right on our heads.

As for how we got into this mess: Money was tight. I had gone out on my own as a filmmaker, and Rachel had left a job in New Orleans to come to Huntsville, Alabama, and marry me a couple of months earlier. We saw the 1920s bungalow in the First Points Historic District near downtown Huntsville, and we loved it. Yeah, hey, it was run-down—and chopped up, with rooms added on its porches and later enclosed, and an odd ceiling drop from 10 feet to about 7 as you moved from the house's original front to its back. But we bought the house “as is” at a low price, thinking we'd Sheetrock the walls, put in a new kitchen, and be done. Well, I guess you could call it the house that love built, because we definitely had a lot more of that than we did hard construction experience.

One other thing we had a lot of? Problems. After we



BEFORE

## EXTERIOR

Joel and Rachel Banta (left) transformed the exterior of their 1920s house by combining the porch—built by Rachel's father-in-law—and relocating the original corner. New Craftsman-style pillars replaced old metal rods.

Photographs by Jean Alloupp  
Styling by Brian Carter





found out about the dangerous flooring, we discovered termite damage, too. We had no time for panic. Just making the place livable was going to take way longer than the four months we'd projected for the remodel. Restoring the house's historic character would be long on the to-do.

Rachel understood old houses better than I did because she'd grown up hearing her father, Paul Capra, talk about his work restoring historical homes. He turned out to be our hero. During our renovation, he drove several hours to Hillsville from his house in New Orleans once a month, spending a weekend teaching us what to do—everything from renovating the framing to laying floorboards and tile. When he left on Sunday, we'd try to do everything he'd said. I'm a film guy with a graphic-designs background, and I'd never even held a nail gun. That would change, and fast.

We knew we wanted a three-bedroom, two-bath house—the same room count we started with, except we wanted to do away with two of the existing bedrooms and a bathroom to open up a large living room-kitchen area. Since the house is in a historic district, we could make only cosmetic changes, not additions, to the front, so to give us more living space we decided to add a master suite off the back. Rachel and I poured the concrete floorings and laid the cedar-block foundations ourselves, under Paul's guidance. We also finished a room in the attic, making a total of 2,100 square feet of living space.

The glory of the new open-plan kitchen and living room would be the house's original long-laid pine floors. But we'd need to refinish them, not to mention add a new subfloor, since we could see the bare ground peeking through gaps between some of the boards. I spent a month pulling up the floorboards, which required removing carpeting and then, piece by piece, a layer of glued-down insulation. We took the floorboards one by one, measured shop where they shined up and to find some to match. The shop owner took a close look and said, "You can't use these. They have asbestos glue on them." Forget the potential danger—a month of wasted labor flashed before my eyes. Then, now, Rachel can hardly talk about it, except to say, "That was a day for me, I scared."

We ended up replacing the wood with new

## LIVING ROOM AND KITCHEN

The existing house was chopped up by numerous walls (see "BOLD," which made it seem even smaller). The new open floor layout merges the living room and kitchen to create a spacious feeling inside the tiny house. A vaulted ceiling allows natural light to stream in from the attic-level dormer.



## LIBRARY

Each of the three bedrooms of the ceiling transition between the kitchen and living room to access them. Just behind a reading library ladder with patterned linings, the white Rachel & Kingsley section of the house serves as a great secondary entrance to the kitchen and office.



## KITCHEN

Cab work, underlayment built by Rachel & Kingsley with some of the same pine floors and period-style linings. The stainless steel appliances and center island give the vintage home a kitchen an updated look. New soffits in yellow pine floors reveal the longest pine boards that Joel and Rachel reluctantly scrapped.



southern yellow pine, instead to look like the old loggia we'd hoped for. And, aside from the floors, Rachel got her dream kitchen, a mix of historical and modern. The vintage-style cabinets are a real testament to her dad's vision. He arrived one night with 25 sheets of birch plywood, and he and I spent three days making cabinet and drawer boxes. He made the doors in his shop at home, and on his next trip we installed everything. Rachel chose period-style bar pulls for the drawers and vertical bar pulls from IKEA for the cabinets. We had push-button switches installed, too, for a period touch.

The kitchen is perfect, but the house's share prices the living room, where the plan involved frugal series of lightbulb moments. When we were clearing out the attic, we discovered the framing of an original dormer on the front of the house, so we decided to give the living area a vaulted ceiling, peaking at about 18 feet, to show it off and open up the room even more. Since we had to put in a regular 10-foot ceiling in the kitchen to conceal electrical systems, there was a transition from a flat ceiling to a vaulted one. My father, who helped with everything from cutting asphalt shingles for the roof to painting the rooms, thought it would be a great spot for bookshelves—but 10 feet up in the air, how would we get to the books? We made pencil shavings and came up with a platform library staircase, like something you'd see in an old movie. I multi-colored hickory-ladder hardware, and when Rachel's dad came we built it in four days. Done. Many of the other historical details, like interior trimmings, woodwork, beadboard ceilings, and simple flat trim, were inspired by a local treasure house in a 1926 bungalow. Most of our house's trim had been removed over the years, so Rachel's dad and the contractor, taking notes and measurements, really paid off.

It's amazing that a few years ago, when we bought the house, I didn't know what a real gem was. Now I have several of them, and a builder's license too. Renovating a house is a lot like making a film. Each involves many layers. Maybe Rachel and I will even do another house since we are now a family of three, having welcomed baby Elizabeth. If we do, one thing's for sure: I'll line up a crew to help me with the concrete and cedar blocks. ■



#### MASTER BEDROOM

Operable transoms over the doors are fitted with vintage hardware and furnishings, and we left the master bedroom window located on the rear addition.



#### MASTER BATH

The old bath was dark and lacked storage (LEFT). A windowed space in the wall now makes for a light-filled master bath with a glass-enclosed shower and large mirrors.



#### FLOOR PLANS

Doing away with two of the bedrooms allowed the couple to enter the front entry and create one large open-plan living room and cook space. A 20-foot rear addition housed the new master suite.



#### SINK STATION

Light fixtures with glass shades, marble counters, and handmade painted spindle cabinets evoked a vintage look. Period perfect tin pots and faucets complement the classic style.







Our cast  
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**TOM SILVA**  
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Landscape contractor



**HELEN GRETEMEYER**  
Host

**My old rhododendron isn't producing as many blooms as it used to. Can anything be done to bring them back?**

—TOM ROGUE, BAYPORT, N.J.



Roger Cook levels the soil around a rhododendron that is clearly thriving in its location.

**ROGER COOK REPLIES:** Rhododendrons are right for lots of reasons. But it's not that difficult to perk them up if you give them these four things:

**Breathroom.** Rhododendrons need about half a day of sunlight to build up enough energy to bloom. May be yours is being shaded by trees that have grown and are now blocking the sun. If so, thin or limb up trees that are creating shade, or transplant the shrub to a sunnier location.

**Good soil.** If your rhododendron is anything but, test the soil. Rhododendrons do especially well in free-draining, slightly acidic soils with a pH from 4.5 to 6. If calcium is called for, add gypsum, because limestone raises soil pH. Add nutrients only in the amounts called for by the test. Too much fertilizer is a potential death sentence for these shrubs.

**Root protection.** Rhododendrons have shallow root systems, which makes them vulnerable to drought. Give them lots of extra water during long dry spells in the summer and fall. And to slow down evaporation, cover the roots with a layer of mulch 2 to 4 inches thick. Take away ground-up leaves because they break down quickly and smother the soil.

**Regular pruning.** This stimulates branch growth and increases the opportunities for flower buds to form. Old rhododendrons can benefit from a vigorous pruning.

Right after the shrub finishes blooming, take out any branches that are dead, diseased, or crowding, then prune one-third of the remaining ones. Make each cut about 1/2 inch above a cluster of latent buds—these little pink bumps—and they'll sprout into new shoots. To get even more buds, pinch back the new shoots when they are 1/2 inch long.

Prune another third of the unopened branches the following year, and the final third the year after that. By then, you should be enjoying a great flower show.

### Simple fix for noisy floors

The squeaks in our second floor are so bad, the house sounds haunted. How can we fix them without tearing up the carpeting?  
—PAUL GAGLIARDINI, NORTHEAST, IND.

**TOM SILVA REPLIES:** Your floor creaks because a nail has popped loose, leaving a gap between the subfloor and the joists. Every time you put your weight on that spot, the nail rubs against the wood fibers and creates those creepy squeaks. To stop them, you have to re-attach the subfloor to the joists, and the perfect fastener for this purpose are Squeerex No More screws ([squeerex.com](http://squeerex.com)). Each one has a screw built on its shaft so that the head can be snipped off after the threads pull the joist and subfloor together. The rest of the screw remains just below the subfloor's surface. These screws don't damage carpeting, so you don't have to remove it to make this repair.

With the Squeerex No More kit, any DIY'er can fix floor creaks once the location of the joists has



What is it?

- 1 Extension ladder clip
- 2 Rafter-square holder
- 3 Circular saw rip guide
- 4 Hinge-holding jig for doors

FOR THE FULL LIST, VISIT [T.O.H.COM](http://T.O.H.COM)



Downy woodpeckers use a flexible beak (DEET) in search of insects or a warm nesting hole.

been pinpointed using a drill and the joint-finding bit that comes with the kit. To see how to use the bit and how to attach the subfloor through a carpet, watch me doing the repair at [doityourself.com/pe3815](http://doityourself.com/pe3815).

Follow that procedure and you should be able to enjoy some peace and quiet on your second floor.

### Woodpeckers gone wild

Woodpeckers the size of sparrows have drilled about two dozen holes through our cedar clapboards and the foam sheathing behind it. How do I repair the damage and stop these feathered thiefs from returning?  
—JESSIE PHILLIPS, EL DORADO, MISS.

**KEVIN O'CONNOR REPLIES:** I took your woodpecker problem to Paul Carrao, an associate professor and extension wildlife specialist at the Cornell Department of Natural Resources. Based on your description, he's sure the damage was caused by downy woodpeckers, a federally protected species that he's studied extensively in the field. According to Carrao, the only real option, at most, is to seal the entry.

Of the many products that claim to do that—moldings of bark, creosote, balls with holographic eyes bouncing on springs—Carrao found that 6-foot strips of Mylar tape, spaced about 2 feet apart and hung from the fascia to flatter in the wind, were the most effective. Carrao also observed that woodpeckers seem to prefer houses painted a neutral brown or gray and avoid those painted in bright colors.

Unfortunately, now that the downies have discovered that cozy nook on under your cedar siding, Carrao says, no amount of Mylar tape or colorful paint will discourage them from making him to your siding. So I checked with Tom Silva to see what he recommends.

According to Tom, your best bet is to remove all the wood siding and trim, fill the holes in the sheathing with spray foam, and install factory-painted fiber-cement siding with cellular PVC trim. In his experience, woodpeckers give these materials a wide berth. Putting a new screen like HomeSticker ([bejaminobley.com](http://bejaminobley.com)) underneath the siding would add another layer of deterrence, should a determined woodpecker ever manage to drill through the fiber screen.



**Q Air for vent hoods**  
Our remodeler intends to install a 1,200-cubic-foot-per-minute (cfm) range hood. I know that hoods this size are required to have makeup air, but how should it be supplied?

—STEVEN GANSALE, MOONVILLE, N.C.

**RICHARD TRETHEWY REPLIES:** Yep, the International Residential Code (IRC) does stipulate that any vent hood exhausting more than 400 cfm should have a ducted system that leads outside making up air into the house at the same rate that made air is removed. Makeup air keeps the air pressure inside and outside the house in balance. Without that system in place, air would instead be pulled in through the exhaust flues of a water heater, a heating system, or a clean air—delivering carbon monoxide and other unhealthy stuff with it.

The IRC also specifies that makeup air be controlled by a powered damper system that automatically opens a flap inside a duct when the vent hood is running, then seals shut when the hood is turned off. Brian Stokes took a guess, go to a house owner for a calculator that will tell you what size damper you'll need.

The damper on inside a duct with one end that protrudes an outside wall. This idea has to be at least 10 feet from any other exhaust outlets and covered with a screen to keep out pests. There are no hard-and-fast rules about where to locate the other end of the makeup air duct. Ideally,

## What is it?

**Q Rafter-square holder**  
Clipped to a tool belt, this extruded aluminum Squaredock keeps a rafter square within easy reach without hogging valuable pouch space. \$20 squaredock.net



its outlet would be right beneath the vent hood so that the unconditioned outside air would be sent right back where it came from.

But if you don't want sticky summer (or frigid winter) air wafting over your rooftop, connect the inside end to the mass return duct on your HVAC system, which will moderate the temperature and humidity of the incoming air. Another option is to lead the duct to an enclosed utility room where the mechanical systems are housed. Either way, your furnace and AC units may end up working harder when you're out the exhaust hood on HIGH, but that's a small price to pay for the keeping the air pressure in proper balance.

**Q How to bend shingles**  
We're having trouble replacing the shingles on our 1922 house where the lower edge of the wall flares out like a bell. The shingles either snap or won't bend enough. What's the trick to get them to follow the curve?

—JENNIFER ANDERSON, NEW HARTINGTON, S.C.

**TOM RIZA REPLIES:** You'll need to "cook" your shingles to make the wood fibers more pliable. To do that, soak them in hot water for the better

the better—or suspend them above steaming water inside a covered container. After 15 to 30 minutes, put on some thick leather gloves and, as fast as you can, get the hot shingles to the wall and nail them in place. If you let them cool down, they'll be just as obstinate as uncooked shingles.

**Q Knock out knotweed**  
My yard is being overtaken by Japanese knotweed. I've pulled up its roots, chopped it to the ground, and sprayed it with herbicide until it still comes back. Can it be stopped?

—SCHEWLEY LYNN, MAINE

**ROGER COOK REPLIES:** This stuff is the worst. Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) is highly invasive, smothering native vegetation with its dense foliage and thick rhizomes, and, in this country at least, has no natural predators to keep it under control. It's already established in the Northeast, Midwest, and Northwest and continues to spread. Hard to believe it was brought here deliberately in the 1800s as an ornamental for hedges.

It is possible to knock out knotweed if you attack it as a smart and disciplined way. If the patch is small, with fewer than 50 stalks,

## Home TOH editors' picks



### Water saver

**Edgy garden weeder**  
Stick this solar-powered weeder in the ground, and it will stream plant-sucking darts to your smartphone. It tracks levels of ambient light, temperature, humidity, and soil moisture and alerts you with a 5-foot radius. If things get touchy, the sensor can activate the Edgy Water Valve (\$60) on your irrigation system to send water. \$100 edgy.com

### Back saver

**Bease ergonomic shovel**  
Whether you're digging or shoveling, you can reduce the weight of your handle on this 5-pound shovel so that you never have to cook your wrist. Nonmetal, what? That means less fatigue, improved posture, and a greater range of motion over a conventional shovel. \$60 bease.com



### Bog saver

**Magic Dirt certified-organic potting soil**  
As the soil is widely by product of cow-muree biodegraders that produce methane gas for fuel, this sterile loam offers the same qualities as peat moss—with five times the nutrients—and no bog as needed to get it. \$6 per cubic foot magicdirt.com



## Great stuff

Just in time for spring, our favorite new tools, materials, and other products to help you around the yard and garden. —T.O.H. editors



### Hand savers

**Basic rose-gardening gloves**  
Don't let thorns and prickles stop you from tending your roses. Sturdy neoprene gloves protect your forearms from scratches, while supple, washable leather covers your hands. Integral padding in the palm helps prevent blisters, and shockproof gripped neoprene cuffs between fingers and over knuckles ensure comfort and flexibility. \$20 lionkingloves.com

### Space saver

**Two Recycler with SmartFlow**  
Most of the first gas-powered lawn mower that can be stored vertically, thus hogging 70 percent less space than a mower on all fours. The spright position also allows for easy cleanup after mowing. How do you do? With a complete engine makeover that prevents any gas or oil leaks. \$389 harsco.com



### Gas saver

**Echo SEW cordless chain saw**  
Because it's powered by a 58-volt lithium-ion battery, this saw starts easily with a battery, not laboriously with a pullcord. And when it's 35, each bar knifes into a tree trunk, you smell sawdust, not gas fumes. Fully charged, the 13.7-pound unit can make up to 30 cuts through 12-inch logs. \$299 echo.com

## GOT TIP?

Don't forget to check out the new TOH website at [www.thisoldhouse.com](http://www.thisoldhouse.com). You'll find a wealth of information, including the latest in home improvement products, tools, and materials. And you can even get a free copy of the TOH magazine.



and only a couple of years old, you might be able to dig it up in one go, as long as you remove and bag every piece of root or its issue. Leave behind even a half-inch piece, and it can grow back.

But if you find that the root goes deeper than you care to dig—30 feet is the norm for established patches—try this less labor-intensive approach: In the spring, chop back the self-seeder shoots with a strong trimmer when they're 1 to 2 feet high. Collect every stalk—they can take root after being cut—bag them, and put them in the trash. In the late summer, when knotweed flowers, chop it back again with hoppers a few inches above the ground, and immediately disk each cut area with Roundup (glyphosate). This short-lived systemic herbicide migrates to the roots, but it's not likely to kill all of them the first time around. Again, bag all the plant debris



When Japanese knotweed flowers, as shown above, it's time to chop it down and disk systemic herbicide on the stubble.

and put it in the trash. Repeat the process for the next three years, by which time the plant will have used up the energy stored in its roots and rhizomes and will die.

However, if you're stuck with knotweed in your water, you can't use Roundup; it's highly poisonous to fish and other aquatic creatures. But if you painstakingly cut down and collect all the stalks three or four times a year, the weed should eventually succumb. *Justipally!*

**Q Foam in attic**  
Is it okay to spray foam in the ceiling of a gabled attic? Should the attic be vented, and if so, how do you do it?

—LARRY SITTON, ROLLA, MISSOURI

**A TOM SILVER REPUBLIC** Yes, it's definitely okay to spray foam against the underside of

a roof, whether it's gabled or not. And because the attic will then be inside the envelope of the house, you'll almost certainly find that your house is more comfortable in the winter and summer and that you're spending less on heating and cooling. What's more, a roof installed on this way doesn't have to be vented, according to the International Residential Code (IRC).

That said, there are some things you need to keep in mind when using foam in an attic in your climate zone. This is not a DIY project: Even though they sell spray-foam kits to DIYers, attic areas are big, uncomfortable places to work in, and foam can be tricky to use. You'll be better off leaving this project to the pros. Use closed-cell foam. Open-cell foam is permeable to moisture, which means there's a chance that during one of your notoriously cold winters, moisture vapor from

inside the house could condense inside the foam and lead to rot on roof sheathing. Closed-cell foam is impermeable to moisture. And because it's also fairly rigid, it will help strengthen your entire roof.

**Find the dew point.** Condensation can occur on the inside surface of closed-cell foam, too, if temps get cold enough and the humidity is sufficiently high. The best way to prevent this is to make the foam thick enough so it stays above the calculated dew point—the temperature at which water vapor condenses—inside the foam. Your contractor can make that calculation and determine the best thickness for your climate. Then, just to be safe, provide some heat in the attic, just as you would a room in your house. If you keep the space warmish, there's a better chance that the foam will stay dry. **Wait until the weather warms up.** Spray foam doesn't adhere well to cold surfaces

or behave as predictably when it's applied in cold weather. **Protect it from fire.** Once in place, spray-foam batts are required to have an ignition barrier to prevent them from igniting and self-igniting at a fire. For most lofts, that ignition barrier is a continuous layer of drywall, but there are now foams with built-in fire-suppressing chemicals.

## Ask THIS OLD HOUSE

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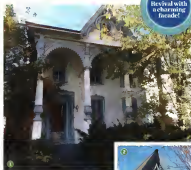
# SAVE THIS OLD HOUSE

PRICE: \$35,000  
LOCATION: Oxford, New York  
CONTACT: Doug Miller 802-226-0288

**THE HISTORY** When mill owner Clark Lewis built this house, around 1850, it was a modestly adorned Greek Revival. In the years that followed, business boomed, and he bought up the grist, lumber, and plaster mills in town and used his newfound wealth to transform his single house with an eccentric Gothic Revival facade. Business declined after the Civil War and eventually he sold the house to a distant relative. The home traded hands and was at one point converted to a boarding house. It has been vacant for about 80 years.

**WHAT IT OFFERS** The Gothic Revival exterior has extensive detailing including elaborate vergeboards, drip molds over the windows and doors, and curved porch posts. The interior retains the 1850s millwork and heart-pine floorboards, as well as staircase and a single window bay added later.

**WHAT IT NEEDS** The 3,500-square-foot house sits on an sturdy stone foundation but needs considerable work, including new wiring, updated plumbing, and repairs to the heating system. Large portions of the plaster walls have been damaged and need to be restored or replaced. Ten credits of up to 40 percent eligible help to keep the costs down. Oxford is a charming town of 3,900 nestled between Oneonta and Poughkeepsie. Whoever restores the house will be in good company, as the area has seen a recent upsurge in the restoration of some of its historic properties, including a reported Greek Revival house next door. —PAUL HOFF



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